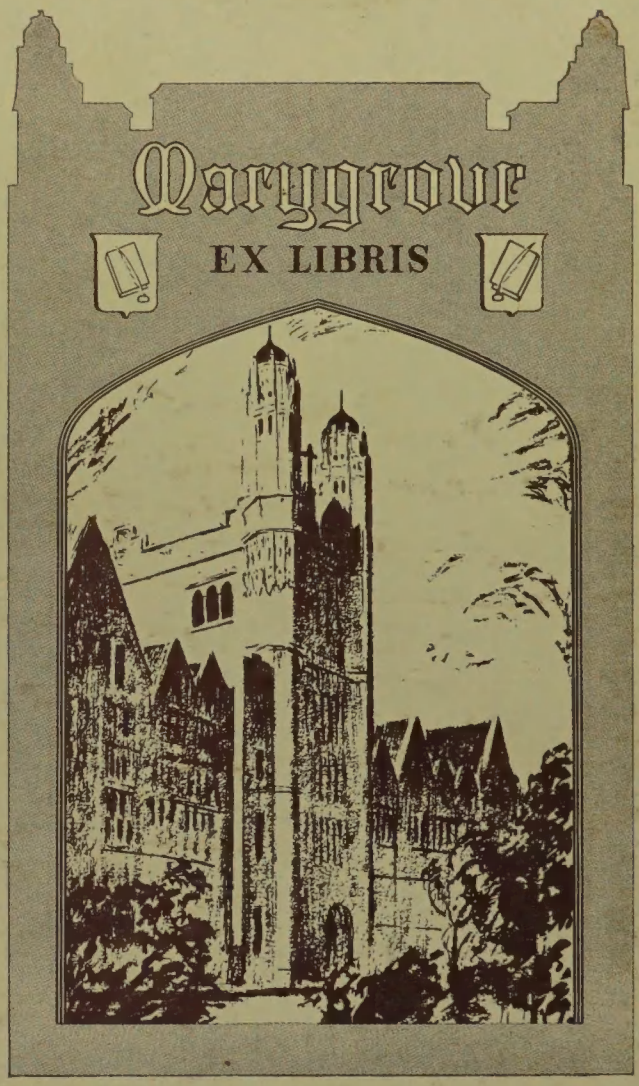
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No. 314

THE

COMPLETE WORKS

OF

ROBERT BURNS

A Vision

BY HEEDLESS CHANCE I TURN'D MY EYES,
AND. BY THE MOONBEAM; SHOOK TO SEE
A STERN AND STALWART GHAIST ARISE,
ATTIR'D AS MINSTRELS WONT TO BE.

THE

COMPLETE WORKS

OF

ROBERT BURNS

(SELF-INTERPRETING)

ILLUSTRATED WITH SIXTY ETCHINGS

AND WOOD CUTS, MAPS AND FACSIMILES

VOLUME VI

PART I

NEW YORK CHICAGO

E. R. DUMONT, PUBLISHER

THIS EDITION

OF

THE WORKS AND LIFE OF ROBERT BURNS,

IS DEDICATED TO

ANDREW CARNEGIE,

OF

PITTSBURGH, PA.,

WHO, IN HIS GRAPHIC SKETCH OF

"TRIUMPHANT DEMOCRACY"

has depicted a practical realization of that EMANCIPATION of
which Burns dared to dream, a hundred years ago;
and who, in himself, is a gratifying
example of the worth of

"THE GLORIOUS PRIVILEGE OF BEING INDEPENDENT."

PREFACE TO VOLUME VI.

On finishing this last volume, completing our edition of The Works and Life of Robert Burns, we have only to say that we have endeavored fully to fill the promise of excellence and completeness, made in our first volume. We have (as circumstantially stated at page 318 of the present volume) more closely followed the text of the Douglas edition than we originally intended; but we have added many original notes and other interesting memoranda (indicated J. H. or G. G.), besides embodying all notes of previous editors that we thought worthy of preservation; thus carrying forward all the excellences of all previous editions into this edition.

Our Illustrations, we think, will speak for themselves. Our chronological arrangement has at least the recommendation of novelty. Our record of the Bibliography of Burns will be useful for understanding the progress of completing his works (see page 310, *infra*). The Table from page 336 to 342 shews all the editions of his works published in ninety years (three hundred and forty-eight in all), bespeaking a popularity such as no author but Bunyan or Defoe or Shakespeare can boast. For this last-named Table we have to make our acknowledgment to Mr. M'Kie's "The Burns Calendar" (Kilmarnock, 1874).

We give the entire Music of the Thomson Collection and of the chief songs from the Johnson *Museum*.

Our Glossary is far more complete than any heretofore published, — and this, notwithstanding that we have generally glossed the English meaning at the end of each line where the Scotch word occurs.

Our treatment of the doubtful and spurious pieces is more thorough than ever before attempted.

We have to say, in looking back on our labors, that we recognize that Burns has had five great editors, viz.: Currie, Cunningham, Chambers, Waddell and Douglas; and, with our improvements on those editions all herein combined, we think this work is very nearly complete; and we hope and trust that the industry and care we have bestowed on our "labor of love," will be so well appreciated by some future editor as to receive, at least. "honorable mention."

G. G.

Philadelphia, *August 24, 1887.*

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THE MINSTREL AT LINCLUDEN.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1796.)

As I stood by yon roofless tower,
Where the wa'flow'r scents the dewy air,
Where the houlet mourns in her ivy bower,
And tells the midnight moon her care.

Chorus.—A lassie all alone, was making her moan,
Lamenting our lads beyond the sea;
In the bluidy wars they fa', and our honor's
gane an' a',
And broken-hearted we maun die.

The winds were laid, the air was still,
The stars they shot along the sky;
The tod was howling on the hill,
And the distant-echoing glens reply.
A lassie all alone, &c.

The burn, adown its hazelly path,
Was rushing by the ruin'd wa',
Hasting to join the sweeping Nith,
Whase roarings seem'd to rise and fa'.
A lassie all alone, &c.

The cauld blae North was streaming forth
Her lights, wi' hissing, eerie din,
Athort the lift they start and shift,
Like Fortune's favors, tint as win'.
A lassie all alone, &c.

Now, looking over frith and fauld,
Her horn the pale-faced Cynthia rear'd,
When lo! in form of Minstrel auld,
A stern and stalwart ghaist appear'd.
A lassie all alone, &c.

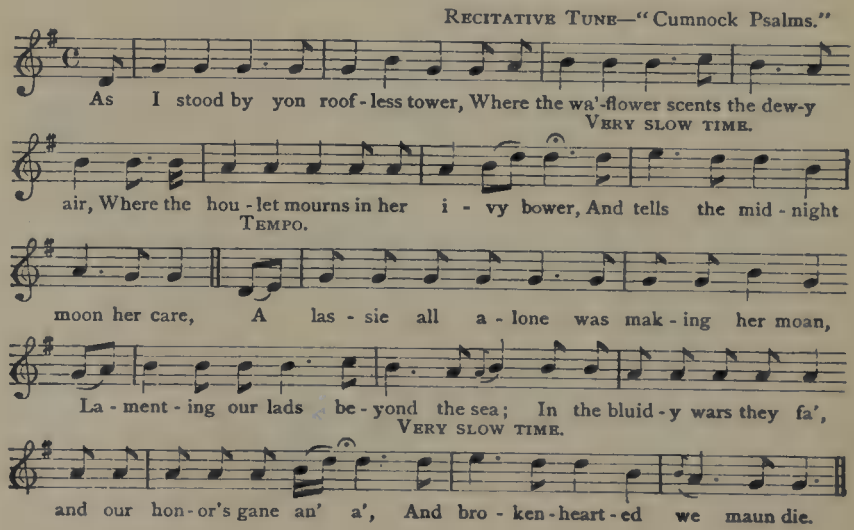
And frae his harp sic strains did flow,
Might rous'd the slumbering Dead to hear;
But oh, it was a tale of woe,
As ever met a Briton's ear!
A lassie all alone, &c.

He sang wi' joy his former day,
He, weeping, wail'd his latter times;
But what he said—it was nae play,
I winna ventur't in my rhymes.
A lassie all alone, &c.

[The above is the poet's first version of a sublime lyric, which he ultimately left on record under the title, "A Vision," in which some changes are made in the text, and the chorus is excluded.

(The chorus of this first version, as will be seen in our note to the second version, and its connection, is significant as proving that Burns's mind was running on the American war at the time he composed it.—G. G.)

In the *Museum* this lyric is set to a strange, weird-like melody, called "Cumnock Psalms," which we here present to the reader.]



AN ODE TO LIBERTY.

(*Here first published complete.*)

The first part, of this Masterpiece of the poet, which, under the title of "A VISION," was first published in Currie's edition of Burns's works (in 1800), shows on the face of it that it was intended as a prelude to a more important poem. Currie notes at the end of the piece "Our poet's prudence suppressed the Song of Liberty; it may be questioned whether even in the resources of *his* genius, a strain of poetry could have been found worthy of the grandeur and solemnity of this preparation." Of course "the song" to which Currie refers is the song which the minstrel sang, referred to in the second last stanza of the "Vision":—

> And frae his heart sic strains did flow,
> Might rouse the slumbering dead to hear,
> But, O! it was a tale of woe
> As ever met a Briton's ear.

All the best editors of Burns have regretfully felt that there had either existed and been destroyed, or that there still existed somewhere, but withheld from the public, "The Song" heard in the "Vision."

Chambers says, "Burns hinted, for more than a hint cannot be ventured upon, his sense of the degradation of the ancient manly spirit under the conservative terrors of the passing era."

Cunningham, nearer the mark, says "He gave us 'The Vision,' perhaps, in these yeasty political times, he dared not venture on The Song which the minstrel poured from his lips."

Gilfillan says more recently "The Song of Liberty was probably written but suppressed."

We are glad to be able to announce that we, for the first time, present to the world the perfect poem. At the end we give a history of the discovery of the missing Song or Ode, now permanently restored to its prelude; and we make bold to say that in the complete poem, the world possesses an Apostrophe To LIBERTY, one of the most noble and heart stirring tributes ever offered by genius at her shrine.

The Editor of Blackie's edition says concerning "A Vision," "The last verse of this beautiful poem is surely a most unfortunate one. Indeed, it would be difficult to point out any piece in which a stronger instance of the bathos, or art of sink-

ing, is exhibited than is done in the last two lines of this otherwise admirable poem. That the stanza should not have been altogether omitted, and the poem allowed to stand as a fragment, has always appeared to us a matter of wonder." [This editor was not aware of the existence of "The Ode to Liberty," which was subsequently discovered.]

A very careful study of the subject, with the complete Vision, and "Ode or Song" before us, leads us to the following conclusions, viz.: that Burns, as he generally did, produced the two pieces as a connected whole, and nearly at a sitting; but that he must have immediately afterwards seen that it would be unsafe to publish them in that form, and therefore added the last verse to the "Vision" or prelude:

> He sang wi' joy his former day,
> He, weeping, wail'd his latter times;
> But what he said—it was nae play,
> I winna ventur't in my rhymes.

This we suppose he did in order to give an air of completeness to what would otherwise have appeared a fragment; and this would account for the "bathos or sinking" which Blackie's annotator has so intelligently pointed out.

We have therefore in our new version of the combined Vision and Ode left out the "sinking" verse,—reproducing the complete work as we believe it to have been originally formed in the brain of Burns.

In support of our theory, that Burns felt that, in the Ode to Liberty, he had dangerous literature on hand, and yet that he made one or two attempts to utilize it, we refer to his reciting part of it to Josiah Walker (see page 10, *infra*), as well as to a letter to Mrs. Dunlop (page 9, *infra*), which shows he was contemplating the adaptation of part of it "as an irregular Ode to Washington's Birth Day." Finally, we find him consenting that Mr. Perry, the editor of the, then, radical Morning Chronicle of London, should have it for publication, with the stipulation, "Only let them insert it as a thing they have met with by accident, and unknown to me." (See reference of letter to Captain Patrick Miller, page 9, *infra*.)

(PART I.)—A VISION.

As I stood by yon roofless tower,
Where the wa'flower scents the dewy air,
Where the howlet mourns in her ivy bower,
And tells the midnight moon her care.

Ode

No Spartan tube, no Attic shell,
No Lyre Æolian I awake,
'Tis Liberty's bold note I swell,
Thy harp, Columbia, let me take
See gathering thousands while I sing,
A broken chain, exulting, bring
And dash it in a tyrant's face.'
And ~~brave~~ dare him to his very beard,
And tell him, he no more is feared,
No more the Despot of Columbia's race
A tyrant's proudest insults braved,
They shout, a People freed! They hail an Empire saved

Where is Man's godlike form?
Where is that brow erect & bold,
That eye that can, unmoved, behold
The wildest rage, the loudest storm,
That e'er created fury dared to raise.'
Avaunt! thou caitiff, servile, base,
That tremblest at a Despot's nod,

yet

Yet, crouching under th' iron rod,
Canst land the arm that struck th' insulting blow.
Art thou of man's imperial line?
Dost boast that countenance divine?
Each sculking feature answers. NO!
But come, ye sons of Liberty,
Columbia's offspring, brave as free,
In danger's hour still flaming in the van.
Ye know, & dare maintain, The Royalty of Man.

Alfred, on thy starry throne,
Surrounded by the tuneful choir
Of the Bards that erst have struck the patriot lyre,
And roused the freeborn Briton's soul of fire,
To more thy England own. —
Dare injured nations form the great design,
To make detested tyrants bleed?
Thy England execrates the glorious deed!
Beneath her hostile banners waving.
Every pang of honor braving,
England in thunder calls — "The Tyrant's cause is mine.

That

Facsimile of the Original MSS. in the possession of
Mr. Robert Clarke, Cincinnati, Ohio.

The winds were laid, the air was still,
The stars they shot alang the sky;
The fox was howling on the hill,
And the distant echoing glens reply.

The stream, adown its hazelly path,
Was rushing by the ruin'd wa's,
To join yon river on the Strath,*
Whase distant roaring swells and fa's.

The cauld *blae* North was streaming forth — bleak
Her lights, wi' hissing, *eerie* din; — unearthly
Athwart the *lift* they start and shift, — sky
Like Fortune's favors, *tint* as win. — lost

By heedless chance I turn'd my eyes,
And, by the moonbeam, shook to see
A stern and stalwart ghaist arise,
Attir'd as Minstrels wont to be.

Had I a statue been o' stane,
His daring look had daunted me;
And on his bonnet grav'd was plain,
The sacred posy—"LIBERTIE!"

And frae his harp *sic* strains did flow, — such
Might rous'd the slumb'ring Dead to hear;
But oh, it was a tale of woe,
As ever met a Briton's ear!

(PART II.)—THE ODE TO LIBERTY.

(The song the minstrel sang.)

No Spartan tube, no Attic shell,
No lyre Æolian I awake;
'Tis liberty's bold note I swell,
Thy harp, Columbia, let me take!

* The River Nith.

See gathering thousands, while I sing,
A broken chain exulting bring,
And dash it in a tyrant's face,
And dare him to his very beard,
And tell him he no more is feared—
No more the despot of Columbia's race!
A tyrant's proudest insults brav'd,
They shout—a People freed! They hail an Empire saved.

Where is man's godlike form?*
Where is that brow erect and bold—
That eye that can unmov'd behold
The wildest rage, the loudest storm
That e'er created fury dared to raise?

Avaunt! thou caitiff, servile, base,†
That tremblest at a despot's nod,
Yet, crouching under the iron rod,
Canst laud the hand that struck th' insulting blow!
Art thou of man's Imperial line?
Dost boast that countenance divine?
Each skulking feature answers, No!

But come, ye sons of Liberty,
Columbia's offspring, brave as free,
In danger's hour still flaming in the van,
Ye know, and dare maintain, the Royalty of Man!

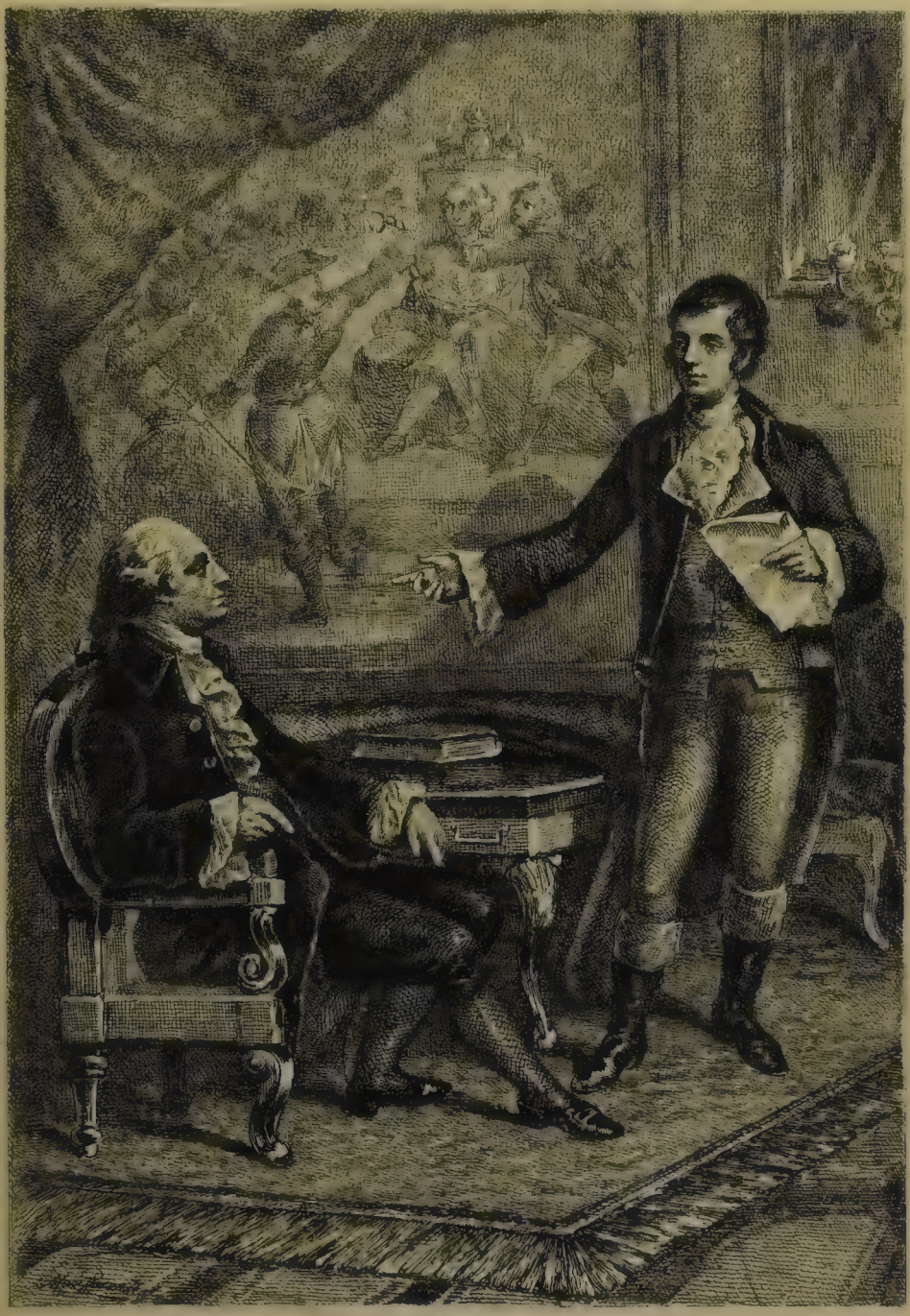
Alfred! on thy starry throne,
Surrounded by the tuneful choir,
The bards that erst have struck the patriot lyre,
And rous'd the freeborn Briton's soul of fire,
No more thy England own!

---

* Washington.

† Lord North, Premier of England, during the whole period of the American War and a zealous supporter of George III. in his measures for repressing the independence of the American Colonists.—G G.

Ode to Washington's Birth Day.



Dare injured nations form the great design,
To make detested tyrants bleed?
Thy England execrates the glorious deed!
Beneath her hostile banners waving,
Every pang of honor braving,
England in thunder calls, "The tyrant's cause is mine!"
That hour accurst how did the fiends rejoice
And hell, thro' all her confines, raise the exulting voice,
That hour which saw the generous English name
Linkt with such damned deeds of everlasting shame!

Thee, Caledonia! thy wild heaths among,
Fam'd for the martial deed, the heaven-taught song,
To thee I turn with swimming eyes;
Where is that soul of Freedom fled?
Immingled with the mighty dead,
Beneath that hallow'd turf where Wallace lies!
Hear it not, WALLACE! in thy bed of death.
Ye babbling winds! in silence sweep,
Disturb not ye the hero's sleep,
Nor give the coward secret breath!
Is this the ancient Caledonian form,
Firm as the rock, resistless as the storm?
Show me that eye which shot immortal hate,
Blasting the despot's proudest bearing;
Show me that arm which, nerv'd with thundering fate,
Crushed Usurpation's boldest daring—
Dark quenched as yonder sinking star,*
No more that glance lightens afar;
That arm no more whirls on the waste of War.

[That the reader may more clearly understand the necessity Burns was under to suppress the "Song of Liberty," we pro-

* This line, we think, confirms our theory that Burns in imagination, is still at midnight the auditor of the Minstrel at Lincluden Abbey.—G. G.

ceed now to take a brief glance at the political situation of the period (1794), which will enable him to appreciate the danger the poet would have incurred had it appeared in print. "The Reign of Terror" was in full blast in France, and the new Republic had declared war against Great Britain—a war which Burns deeply deplored although circumstances compelled him to "set a seal on his lips as to those unlucky politics." The liberal constitution of Poland was being rudely suppressed by Russia, and Kosciusko had just been forced into exile. The Habeas Corpus Act was suspended in Scotland, and State trials for seditious publications were in course of prosecution—of Muir and Palmer in Scotland, and of Hardy, Tooke and Thelwall in England. Pitt and Burke, who had formerly been advocates of extreme liberalism had, because of the enormities of the French Revolution, become as conservative as they had formerly been liberal. The Independence of the American Colonies was, indeed, gratifying to Burns as an advocate and lover of Liberty; yet, as a Briton, he could not but feel the humiliation of the National defeat. Added to this, his unguarded utterances of his sympathy for the Revolutionists in France had lost him some of his best friends; among others, he had quarreled with his close friends and patrons, the Riddells. He had nearly been forced into a duel by a British officer, who, in January, 1794, took offence at a toast which the witty poet had proposed in his presence:—"May our success in the present war* be equal to the justice of our cause." On the 25th of February 1794, he wrote to his friend Cunningham that for two months back he had not been able to lift a pen. "My constitution and frame," he added, "were *ab origine* blasted with a deep, incurable taint of hypochondria, which poisons my existence. Of late, a number of domestic vexations, and some pecuniary share in the ruin of these cursed times—losses which, though trifling, were yet what I could ill bear—have so irritated me, that my feelings at times could only be envied by a reprobate spirit listening to the sentence that dooms it to perdition."

The main pillar which the poet depended on to bear up his soul amid such a wreck of misfortune and misery was "a certain noble, stubborn something in man, known by the names of Courage, Fortitude, Magnanimity." Accordingly, about this period (such was the recollection of the poet's eldest son) he passed most of his musing hours amid the Lincluden

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* The War with the French Republic.—G. G.

ruins. These occupy a romantic situation on a piece of rising ground in the angle at the junction of the Cluden water with the Nith, at a short distance above Dumfries; and here was the scene of his Vision and Song of Liberty.]

THE HISTORY OF THE MISSING "ODE" AND ITS DISCOVERY.

We ought to premise that we rest the claim of our discovery of the connection of "A Vision" and the "Song or Ode to Liberty," on circumstantial evidence, but we think we will be able to make the chain so complete that the public will be willing to endorse our theory, especially when, on reading the entire poem, they note the internal evidence afforded by its manifest harmony and oneness.

Burns, in a letter to Mrs. Dunlop, dated June 25th, 1794, writes "I am just going to trouble your critical patience with the first sketch of a stanza I have been framing as I passed along the road. The subject is LIBERTY: you know, my honored friend, how dear the theme is to me, and I design it as an irregular Ode for Washington's Birthday." The quotation commencing "Thee, Caledonia," which Burns furnished in his letter to Mrs. Dunlop, consists of only the last nineteen lines of the Ode. The original is now in the possession of our friend, Mr. Robert Clarke of Cincinnati, in its entire state (we have reproduced a fac-simile of it for this new edition), and the fact that Mrs. Dunlop's fragment constitutes part of it, clearly proves that it was this same "Ode to Liberty" that Burns referred to in writing to Mrs. Dunlop. In Burns's printed correspondence, a letter addressed by him to Mr. Patrick Miller, Jr., of Dalswinton, M. P., in November 1794, evidently refers to the entire Ode. Mr. Miller had recommended Mr. Perry, of the London Morning Chronicle, to engage Burns to write for that paper. The poet, from prudential reasons, declined the offer made to him by Mr. Perry, but wrote in this connection to Mr. Miller "They are most welcome to my 'Ode,' only let them insert it as a thing they have met with by accident, and unknown to me." (We believe that Burns did not make Perry acquainted with its being connected with the Lincluden "Vision.") We thus trace the sending of the Ode to Mr. Perry; as Perry did not publish it, we may presume that he, although a pronounced radical, in this instance thought "discretion the better part of valor." This was in 1794, and

as we see, all Burns's editors seem to have looked upon the Ode as lost. It was not until November 1872 that Mr. Perry's representatives advertised the manuscript for sale in a London catalogue, and it was purchased for Mr. Robert Clarke, the present owner, to whom our thanks are due for the use above referred to. In this London catalogue it was described as "The original autograph MS. of the Ode on the American War, in 62 lines, in three leaves written on one side only, in good condition, bound in red Morocco cover by Pratt, and lettered 'The American War' by Burns."

Dr. Josiah Walker, who had been introduced to Burns in 1787, and who in 1811 published, anonymously, a memoir of him, visited the poet at Dumfries in October 1794. He says, "I called upon him early in the forenoon. * * * * * * * * * After conversing with him for some time, he proposed a walk, and promised to conduct me through some of his favorite haunts. We accordingly quitted the town, and wandered a considerable way up the beautiful banks of the Nith. Here he gave me an account of his latest productions, and repeated some satirical ballads which he had composed to favor one of the candidates at the last borough election. * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * These I thought inferior to his other pieces, though they had some lines in which vigor compensated for coarseness. He repeated also his fragment of an 'Ode to Liberty' with marked and peculiar energy, and showed a disposition—which, however, was easily repressed—to throw out political remarks, of the same nature with those for which he had been reprehended." *

Professor Wilson, (Christopher North,) on remarking on this interview of Josiah Walker says, in a spirit of well-merited contempt, "On the first day the poet conducted his old acquaintance through some of his beautiful haunts and for his amusement set off some of his electioneering squibs, which are among the best ever composed and, Whiggish as they are, might have tickled a Tory as they jogged along; but Jos thought them 'inferior to his other pieces.' Perhaps they walked as far as Lincluden, where the bard would repeat his famous fragment of an 'Ode to Liberty' with 'marked and peculiar energy.' The listener ought to have lost his wits, and to have leapt sky-high. But he felt himself called by the voice that sent him on that mission, to *rebuke* the bard on the banks of his own river; for 'he showed a disposition

* Burns had been "admonished" by the Board of Excise for indiscreet utterances, Dec., 1792.—G. G.

(which, however, was easily repressed) to throw out political remarks, of the same nature with those for which he had been reprehended.' What right had Josiah Walker to repress any remarks made, in the confidence of friendship, by Robert Burns? And what power? Had Burns chosen it, he could as easily *squabashed* Josiah as thrown him into the Nith." If 'Christopher North' could feel and speak so strongly in his admiration for the mere *fragment* of the Song or Ode to Liberty (which was all that he could be acquainted with), what would he have said had he seen the whole Ode as we now present it? One more argument to our chain and we are done:—Burns wrote two versions of the 'Vision,' one, entitled the 'Minstrel at Lincluden,' was sent to Johnson's Museum in the poet's life-time and published in 1796, and to each verse is attached a chorus which runs:—

> A lassie all alone, was making her moan,
> Lamenting our lads beyond the sea;
> In the bluidy wars they fa', and our honor's gane an' a',
> And broken-hearted we maun die.

We mention this as showing the connection between Burns's thoughts at the Lincluden Vision and the American War referred to in his Minstrel's Song. We do not anticipate that the intelligent reader will have any hesitation in arriving at the same conclusion we have done as here set forth, that this Ode *is the missing song*.

The late William S. Douglas, to whom we are indebted for several facts in this description, published the Ode in his Kilmarnock edition of 1876, and also in his Edinburgh edition of 1878; but in both cases as an "Ode for General Washington's Birthday," and 20 pages away from "A Vision" Mr. Douglas acknowledged his obligation to the Perry manuscript (a copy of which Mr. Clarke had furnished him), but failed to perceive the connection which we have been fortunate enough to discover. The discovery was made quite accidentally by Mr. Gebbie the Publisher, on the 15th of January, 1886, who describes the *modus operandi* of the discovery circumstantially as follows:—

As far back as 1874, Mr. Gebbie was introduced by letter from Mr. Jas. R. Osgood of Boston to the Rev. Mr. Waterston of that city, who is an enthusiastic admirer of Burns, and amongst other treasured relics of the poet, he showed him framed in his library the original manuscript of "A Vision,"

and on reading the poem, Mr. Gebbie was so deeply impressed, especially with the last verse, that his memory ever afterwards retained it :—

He sang wi' joy his former day,
He, weeping, wailed his latter times·
But what he said—it was nae play,
I winna ventur't in my rhymes.

In the present year while Mr. Gebbie (1886) was prosecuting his search for new material for "The Complete Edition of Burns," he opened correspondence with all those whom he knew to possess collections of autographs and reliques of the poet, and was gratified to receive, amongst the first, the original of the "Liberty Ode" from Mr. Clarke. He then wrote to Mr. Waterston, and was informed that the only Burns manuscript which Mr. Waterston now possesses is a poem entitled "A Vision," commencing "As I stood by yon roofless tower." On receipt of that letter Mr. G. turned to the poem, and as he happened at the same time to hold in his hand the fac-simile of the "Ode to Liberty" which he had just been reading when he received Mr. Waterston's reply, it struck him "like a flash" that they fitted each other, and he immediately communicated the discovery to Mr. Hunter. We need hardly say with what delight he was congratulated on the discovery.

To sum all up, as we have already pointed out, in the first version of the Lincluden Vision, Burns's thoughts were running on America.

Second, in all the performances of Burns, he manages to throw a local coloring and an artistic atmosphere around his subjects, which in the Ode by itself are entirely lacking. Preface that Ode with "The Vision" and you get at once atmosphere and locality. The scene is Lincluden ; the time is midnight ; the stars are shooting across the sky ; this is in the commencement of "The Vision." If the reader will look to the end of the Ode the only reference to outside nature is when the minstrel is coming to his close thus :— "Dark quenched as *yonder* sinking star," which we think refers to the time that has elapsed during the progress of the minstrel's song, as well as to the starry night depicted at the commencement of "A Vision." G. G.

THE TREE OF LIBERTY.

[Burns at this period (1794) had the Liberty fever strong upon him. The great heart of the poet throbbed in sympathy with the struggle for the Rights of Man in progress all around him, in America and in France especially. No doubt his own oppressed position influenced him, and he hailed any possibility, however foggy the outline, that might lighten the incubus pressing on the middle and lower classes by the titled and wealthy controlling the reins of power in the social system and the imperial government.*

The authorship of this poem has, we think, been very unreasonably called in question. Since first given to the world by Chambers in 1838, and although printed then direct from the undoubted MS. of the poet, some of the best editors have left it out of their editions—Cunningham, Smith, and Douglas† (ed. 1878), the latter especially, after carefully discussing the matter, pronouncing against Burns's authorship.

Especially taken in connection with the ODE TO LIBERTY (page 3, *supra*), and taken in the stride of events, we say there can be no doubt of the authorship.

If the reader will refer to page 61, Vol. I., he will find a poem on the American War, written in precisely the same metre—"*When Guildford gude*," &c.

As regards the literary quality of "The Tree of Liberty," it is unfair to judge of verses that Burns certainly never intended for publication during his lifetime, having probably written them for the edification of his radical friends Syme and Maxwell; but we think they bear a fair comparison with, and a decided family likeness to, the "Ballad on the American War," referred to at page 61, Vol. I.

The original MS. was in 1876 in the possession of Mr. James Duncan, Mosesfield, Glasgow.—G. G.]

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* In our own days (1886) we hear the mutterings of a storm, originating from similar causes, the greed and heartlessness of the wealthy and fortunate classes, which led to blood-letting in 1794. Whether the wisdom of our legislators, and the awakening to practical sympathy with the needs of underpaid labor, will lead to concessions, and prudent and honest legislation enable us to avoid the storm, we will see, if we live long enough.—G. G.

† Douglas had admitted it into his Kilmarnock edition of 1876, with an expression of doubt; but excluded it in his Edinburgh edition of 1878.

HEARD ye o' the tree o' France,
And *wat* ye what's the name o't? know
Around it a' the patriots dance,
Weel Europe kens the fame o't. well
It stands where ance the Bastile stood,
A prison built by kings, man,
When Superstition's hellish brood
Kept France in leading-strings, man.

Upo' this tree there grows *sic* fruit, such
Its virtues a' can tell, man;
It raises man *aboon* the brute, above
It mak's him ken himsel', man.
Gif ance the peasant taste a bit, If once
He's greater than a lord, man,
And wi' the beggar shares a mite
O' a' he can afford, man.*

This fruit is worth a' Afric's wealth,
To comfort us 'twas sent, man:
To gie the sweetest blush o' health,
And mak' us a' content, man.
It clears the een, it cheers the heart,
Mak's high and low gude friends, man;
And he wha acts the traitor's part,
It to perdition sends, man.

My blessings aye attend the chiel,
Wha pitied Gallia's slaves, man,
And *staw* a branch, spite o' the deil, stole
Frae 'yont the western waves, man.†
Fair Virtue water'd it wi' care,
And now she sees wi' pride, man,

---

* Yet this impracticable, communistic doctrine is genuine Christianity.—G. G.

† Lafayette, fresh from America, with victorious laurels won in the cause of Liberty, gave great impetus to the French Revolution.—G. G.

How weel it buds and blossoms there,
Its branches spreading wide, man.

But vicious folk aye hate to see
The works o' Virtue thrive, man;
The *courtly vermin's bann'd the tree,
And *grat* to see it thrive, man; wept
King Loui' thought to cut it down,
When it was *unco* sma', man; very
For this the watchman crack'd his crown,
Cut aff his head and a', man.

A wicked crew* *syne*, on a time, since
Did tak' a solemn *aith*, man, oath
It ne'er should flourish to its prime,
I wat they pledged their faith, man.
Awa' they gaed wi' mock parade,
Like beagles hunting game, man,
But soon grew weary o' the trade,
And wished they'd been at hame, man.

Fair Freedom, standing by the tree,
Her sons did loudly ca', man;
She sang a sang o' liberty,†
Which pleased them ane and a', man.
By her inspired, the new-born race
Soon drew the avenging steel, man;
The hirelings ran—her foes *gied* chase, gave
And bang'd the despot weel, man.

Let Britain boast her hardy oak,
Her poplar and her pine, man,
Auld Britain ance could crack her joke,
And o'er her neighbors shine, man:

* All the thrones of Europe combined to crush the French Republic, but failed.

† The Marseillaise.

But seek the forest round and round,
And soon 'twill be agreed, man,
That sic a tree cannot be found
'Twixt London and the Tweed, man.

Without this tree, alake this life
Is but a vale o' woe, man;
A scene o' sorrow mixed wi' strife,
Nae real joys we know, man.
We labor soon, we labor late,
To feed the titled knave, man;
And a' the comfort we're to get,
Is that ayont the grave, man.

Wi' plenty o' sic trees, I trow,
The warld would live in peace, man;
The sword would help to mak' a plough,*
The *din* o' war wad cease, man. noise
Like brethren in a common cause,
We'd on each other smile, man;
And equal rights and equal laws
Wad gladden every isle, man.

Wae worth the *loon* wha wadna eat rascal
Sic halesome, dainty cheer, man;
I'd gie the *shoon* frae aff my feet, shoes
To taste the fruit o't here, man.
Syne let us pray auld England may
Sure plant this far-famed tree, man;
And blythe we'll sing, and hail the day
That gave us liberty, man.

Robert Chambers, in his edition of 1856, as introduction to "The Tree of Liberty," says:—"Burns and Syme, with a

* They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, nor shall they learn war any more.—*Isaiah ii. 4.*

young physician named Maxwell, and several others, all latitudinarians in most respects, and all of them enemies of the system pursued by government, held occasional symposia of a strictly private nature, at which they could enunciate their sentiments freely. It is said that they locked the door of their place of meeting—a circumstance which would, of course, set the popular imagination at work, and cause them to be suspected of something even worse than what they were guilty of. In antagonism to them, was a club of Anti-Gallicans, who took upon themselves the name of the *Loyal Natives;* and it appears that one of these gentlemen ventured on one occasion to launch a political pellet at the three friends of the people. A very miserable pellet it was:—

> Ye sons of Sedition, give ear to my song;
> Let Syme, Burns, and Maxwell pervade every throng,
> With Craken the attorney, and Mundell the quack,
> Send Willie the monger to hell with a smack.

"This being handed across the table to Burns at one of the meetings of the disloyal corps, he instantly endorsed it with—

> Ye true Loyal Natives, attend to my song,
> In uproar and riot rejoice the night long;
> From envy and hatred your corps is exempt,
> But where is your shield from the darts of contempt?*

"It is far from likely that the whole of the democratic effusions of Burns have come down to us. For many years, that kind of authorship was attended with so much reproach, that men of humanity studied to conceal rather than to expose the evidence by which it could be proved against him. And even after the poor bard's death, the interests of his young family demanded of all the admirers of his name, that nothing should be brought forward which was calculated to excite a political jealousy regarding him. Hence, for many years there was a mystery observed on this subject. During that time, of course, many manuscripts might perish. As things now stand—the whole matter being looked on as only a curious piece of literary history—there can be no great objection to the publication of any piece of the kind which may have chanced to be preserved. There is one which, but for the manner in which it

* See page 155, Vol. IV.

introduces the name of the unfortunate Louis XVI., might have now been read without any pain, as containing only the feelings of a man who looked too sanguinely upon the popular cause in France."

Cunningham, in his edition of Burns, published in 1842, takes Chambers to task in the following passage:—"I can little share in the feelings with which such pieces as the following have been intruded into the charmed circle of Burns's poetry:—

Lines written on the Ruins of Lincluden College.
Verses on the destruction of the Woods of Drumlanrig.
Verses on a marble slab in the Woods of Aberfeldy.
The Tree of Liberty.

There are eleven stanzas in *The Tree of Liberty*, of which the *best*, compared with 'A man's a man for a' that' of Burns, sounds like a cracked pipkin, against the heroic clang of a Damascus blade."

Mr. Cunningham was too hasty in his fiat. We think, had he carefully read "The Tree of Liberty," and remembered the circumstances under which it was composed, his conclusion would have been different. There are many verses that unmistakably bear the Burns stamp, especially the last four lines of the ninth verse:—

We labor soon, we labor late,
To feed the titled knave, man;
And a' the comfort we're to get,
Is that ayont the grave, man.

What would Cunningham, or Douglas, or other doubters, have, beside that and Burns's own handwriting? Had we picked up that printed verse in the wilderness, we would swear that Burns —and only Burns—could have written it?—G. G.

[☞ NOTE.—If the reader will refer to the "Doubtful Pieces," he will find a "Fragment of a Revolution Song" (see page 331, *infra*), which should be read in this connection.]

INSCRIPTION TO MISS GRAHAM OF FINTRY.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

"I have presented a copy of your book of songs to the daughter of a much-valued and much-honored friend of mine —Mr. Graham of Fintry. I wrote on the blank side of the title page, the following address to the young lady."—*Letter to George Thomson, July* 1794.

HERE, where the Scottish Muse immortal lives,
In sacred strains and tuneful numbers joined,
Accept the gift; though humble he who gives,
Rich is the tribute of the grateful mind.

So may no ruffian * feeling in thy breast,
Discordant, jar thy bosom-chords among;
But Peace attune thy gentle soul to rest,
Or Love ecstatic wake his seraph song,

Or Pity's notes, in luxury of tears,
As modest Want the tale of woe reveals;
While conscious Virtue all the strains endears,
And heaven-born Piety her sanction seals.

[Dr. Currie thus remarks respecting the first line of stanza second:—"It were to have been wished that instead of 'ruffian feeling,' the bard had used a less rugged epithet, *e.g.* '*ruder.*' The MS. in the Thomson correspondence reads 'ruffian;' but we feel persuaded that it is a mere clerical error for 'ruffled,' the word we would venture to adopt in the text."—DOUGLAS.]

* We think "ruffling" the best word.—J. H.

ON THE SEAS AND FAR AWAY.

Tune—"O'er the hills and far away."

(CURRIE, 1800.)

How can my poor heart be glad,
When absent from my sailor lad;
How can I the thought forego—
He's on the seas to meet the foe?
Let me wander, let me rove,
Still my heart is with my love;
Nightly dreams, and thoughts by day,
Are with him that's far away.

Chorus.—On the seas and far away,
On stormy seas and far away;
Nightly dreams and thoughts by day,
Are ay with him that's far away.

When in summer noon I faint,
As weary flocks around me pant,
Haply in this scorching sun,
My sailor's thund'ring at his gun;
Bullets, spare my only joy!
Bullets, spare my darling boy!
Fate, do with me what you may,
Spare but him that's far away.
On the seas and far away,
On stormy seas and far away;
Fate, do with me what you may,
Spare but him that's far away.

At the starless, midnight hour
When Winter rules with boundless power,
As the storms the forests tear,
And thunders rend the howling air,

Listening to the doubling roar,
Surging on the rocky shore,
All I can—I weep and pray
For his weal that's far away.
On the seas and far away,
On stormy seas and far away;
All I can—I weep and pray,
For his weal that's far away.

Peace, thy olive wand extend,
And bid wild War his ravage end,
Man with brother Man to meet,
And as a brother kindly greet;
Then may heav'n with prosperous gales,
Fill my sailor's welcome sails;
To my arms their charge convey,
My dear lad that's far away.
On the seas and far away,
On stormy seas and far away;
To my arms their charge convey,
My dear lad that's far away.

[In Thomson's work, the second stanza is omitted, and the choruses are a repetition of the one to verse first, instead of being varied as in the MS.]

CA' THE *YOWES* TO THE *KNOWES*. ewes / uplands

SECOND VERSION.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

Chorus.—Ca' the yowes to the knowes,
Ca' them where the heather grows,
Ca' them where the burnie *rowes*, rolls
My bonie Dearie.

Hark the *mavis'* e'ening sang, thrush
Sounding Cluden's woods amang;
Then a-faulding * let us *gang*, go
My bonie Dearie.
Ca' the yowes, &c.

We'll gae down by Cluden's side,†
Thro' the hazels, spreading wide,
O'er the waves that sweetly glide,
To the moon sae clearly.
Ca' the yowes, &c.

Yonder Cluden's silent towers,‡
Where, at moonshine's midnight hours,
O'er the dewy bending flowers,
Fairies dance sae cheery.
Ca' the yowes, &c.

Ghaist nor *bogle* shalt thou fear, ghost hobgoblin
Thou'rt to Love and Heav'n sae dear,
Nocht of ill may come thee near; nought
My bonie Dearie.
Ca' the yowes, &c.

Fair and lovely as thou art,
Thou hast *stown* my very heart; stolen
I can die—but canna part,
My bonie Dearie.
Ca' the yowes, &c.

[This was sent to Thomson in September, 1794. The reader has already seen the earlier version of this song, as sent to Johnson, at page 101, Vol. III.]

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* To fold the sheep.
† A little river so called, near Dumfries.—*R. B.*
‡ An old ruin in a sweet situation at the confluence of the Cluden and the Nith.—*R. B.*

SHE SAYS SHE LOES ME BEST OF A'.

Tune—"Oonagh's Waterfall."

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1796.)

SAE flaxen were her ringlets,
Her eyebrows of a darker hue,
Bewitchingly o'er-arching
Twa laughing *e'en* o' lovely blue; eyes
Her smiling, sae *wyling*, enticing
Wad make a wretch forget his woe;
What pleasure, what treasure,
Unto these rosy lips to grow!
Such was my Chloris' bonie face,
When first that bonie face I saw;
And ay my Chloris' dearest charm—
She says, she lo'es me best of a'.

Like harmony her motion,
Her pretty ancle is a spy,
Betraying fair proportion,
Wad make a saint forget the sky:
Sae warming, sae charming,
Her fautless form and gracefu' air;
Ilk feature—auld Nature
Declar'd that she could do nae mair:
Her's are the willing chains o' love,
By conquering Beauty's sovereign law;
And still my Chloris' dearest charm—
She says, she lo'es me best of a'.

Let others love the city,
And gaudy show, at sunny noon;
Gie me the lonely valley,
The dewy eve and rising moon,
Fair beaming, and streaming,
Her silver light the boughs amang;

While falling, recalling,
The amorous thrush concludes his sang:
There, dearest Chloris, wilt thou rove,
By wimpling burn and leafy *shaw*, wood
And hear my vows o' truth and love,
And say, thou lo'es me best of a'.

[This gushing effusion was sent to Thomson in September 1794, along with the letter appearing at p. 249, Vol. V. Thomson in reply said:—"*She says she lo'es me best of a*' is one of the pleasantest table-songs I have seen, and henceforth shall be mine when the song is going round."]

TO DR. MAXWELL,

ON MISS JESSY STAIG'S RECOVERY.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

MAXWELL, if here you merit crave,
That merit I deny;
You save fair Jessie from the grave!—
An Angel could not die!

[In September 1794, the poet closed one of his letters to Thomson by introducing this Epigram thus:—"How do you like the following epigram, which I wrote the other day on a lovely young girl's recovery from a fever? Dr. Maxwell—the identical Maxwell whom Burke mentioned in the House of Commons, was the physician who seemingly saved her from the grave." The reader will understand that Miss Jessy Staig was the heroine of the Song, "Lovely Young Jessie," given at page 148, Vol. IV.]

TO THE BEAUTIFUL MISS ELIZA J——N,

ON HER PRINCIPLES OF LIBERTY AND EQUALITY.

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)

How, Liberty! girl, can it be by thee nam'd?
Equality too! hussey, art not asham'd?

Free and Equal indeed, while mankind thou enchainest,
And over their hearts a proud Despot so reignest.

[This is one of the scraps sent by the author to Mr. Creech on 30th May, 1795 (see letter). We are unable to point out who the lady was. Under the poet's holograph, in a strange hand, some one has inscribed the following Latin epigram which was addressed by Dr. Samuel Johnson to Miss Mary Aston, a Whig lady whom he greatly admired:—

"Liber ut esse velim, suasisti pulchra Maria,
Ut maniam liber—pulchra Maria, vale!"

See "Boswell's Life of Johnson," May 8, 1778.]

ON CHLORIS

REQUESTING ME TO GIVE HER A SPRIG OF BLOSSOMED THORN.

(STEWART, 1801.)

FROM the white-blossom'd sloe my dear Chloris requested
A sprig, her fair breast to adorn:
No, by Heavens! I exclaim'd, let me perish, if ever
I plant in that bosom a thorn!

[In the early part of the present century these lines were set to music and published by W. Shield, the composer, followed by a second verse, which we annex, and the name of Charles Dibdin attached, as author of the song. We consequently, in common with others, were led to consider that Stewart had committed a mistake in attributing the lines in the text to Burns.

They are included, however, among the seventeen Epigrams forwarded by the poet to Mr. Creech in May 1795. We are therefore bound to conclude that Shield fancied the lines for musical composition, and engaged Charles Dibdin to add a stanza, to make the song of reasonable length. The added stanza is as follows:—

"When I shewed her the ring and implor'd her to marry,
She blush'd like the dawning of morn:
Yes, I will! she replied, if you'll promise, dear Harry,
No rival shall laugh me to scorn."]

ON SEEING MRS. KEMBLE IN YARICO.

(STEWART, 1801.)

KEMBLE, thou cur'st my unbelief
Of Moses and his rod;
At Yarico's sweet note of grief
The rock with tears had flow'd.

[This lady was the first wife of Stephen Kemble, "the Fat," who played Falstaff without stuffing. Her maiden name was Satchell. Boaden is enthusiastic in her praise. (See his Life of Mrs. Siddons, p. 214, Vol. I.) "From many fair eyes now shut have we seen her *Ophelia* draw tears in the mad scene: she was a delicious *Juliet*, and an altogether incomparable *Yarico*." — *Blackwood's Magazine*, 1832. This epigram is one of the seventeen sent to Creech. Mrs. Kemble made her first appearance in Dumfries, in the Opera of "Inkle and Yarico," in October 1794.]

EPIGRAM ON A COUNTRY LAIRD,

NOT QUITE SO WISE AS SOLOMON.

(MORRISON'S ED., 1811.)

BLESS Jesus Christ, O Cardoness,
With grateful, lifted eyes,
Who taught that not the soul alone,
But *body* too shall rise;
For had He said "the soul alone
From death I will deliver,"
Alas, alas! O Cardoness,
Then hadst thou lain for ever.[1]

[Mr. David Maxwell of Cardoness, was the gentleman thus satirized; but we are not aware what personal ground of offence he had given to our poet. A daughter of this gentleman became the second wife of Wm. Cunninghame, Esq., of Enterkine, whose first wife, a daughter of Mrs. Stewart of Afton Lodge—died in 1809.]

[1] Then thou hadst slept for ever.

ON BEING SHEWN A BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY SEAT

BELONGING TO THE SAME LAIRD.

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)

WE grant they're thine, those beauties all,
So lovely in our eye;
Keep them, thou eunuch, Cardoness,
For others to enjoy!

[This also occurs among the "poetic clinches" sent by Burns to Creech in May 1795. The satirist here compares the landowner who has not the soul to enjoy his own beautiful estate to a eunuch possessed of a beautiful mistress. This Laird ranked higher in the opinion of some others than in that of Burns. In 1804, he was made a Baronet. He survived to 1825.]

ON HEARING IT ASSERTED THAT FALSEHOOD

IS EXPRESSED IN THE REV. DR. BABINGTON'S VERY LOOKS.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

THAT there is a falsehood in his looks,
I must and will deny:
They tell their Master is a knave,
And sure they do not lie.

[This very severe pasquinade is recorded by Burns himself in the Glenriddell volume now at Liverpool; and it was also one of the trifles sent to Creech in May 1795.]

ON A SUICIDE.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

EARTH'D up, here lies an imp o' hell,
Planted by Satan's dibble;
Poor silly wretch, he's damned himsel',
To save the Lord the trouble.

ON A SWEARING COXCOMB.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

HERE cursing, swearing Burton lies,
A buck, a beau, or "Dem my eyes!"
Who in his life did little good,
And his last words were, "Dem my blood!"

ON AN INNKEEPER NICKNAMED "THE MARQUIS."

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

HERE lies a mock Marquis, whose titles were shamm'd,
If ever he rise, it will be to be damn'd.

ON ANDREW TURNER.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

IN se'enteen hunder 'n forty-nine,
The deil gat stuff to mak a swine,
An' *coost* it in a corner; cast
But wilily he chang'd his plan,
An' shap'd it something like a man,
An' *ca'd* it Andrew Turner. named

[These four epigrams we have classed together, as requiring little comment, and as exhausting the trifles of that kind attributed to Burns which we deem worthy of being reproduced here. Cunningham tells a circumstantial story of the first of these, which we can scarcely credit; for we think the kindly poet would have bestowed a tear of pity rather than waste his satire on such a forlorn wretch.

Andrew Turner, the hero of the last of them, was a "haveril," who had the vanity to ask Burns to make an epigram on him: 1749 was the year of Andrew's birth.]

PRETTY PEG.

(ALDINE ED., 1839.)

As I gaed up by yon gate-end,
When day was waxin weary,
Wha did I meet come down the street,
But pretty Peg, my dearie!

Her air sae sweet, an' shape complete,
Wi' nae proportion wanting,
The Queen of Love did never move
Wi' motion mair enchanting.

Wi' linkèd hands we took the sands,
Adown yon winding river;
Oh, that sweet hour and shady bower,
Forget it shall I never!

[A note in the *Aldine* states that these stanzas were first published in the Edinburgh Magazine for 1818; but we find that they were printed, with some variations, in the same Magazine so early as 1808. Other three verses are added in the earlier copy which we must condemn to small print, because though fair enough in versification, they sadly disturb the sentiment of the lines in the text. Of course, we do not pretend to judge of the authenticity of either half of the ballad.

The music of her pretty feet
Upon my heart did play so;
For ay she tipp'd the sidelin's wink—
"Come kiss me at your leisure!"

Her nut-brown hair, beyond compare,
Adown her neck did stray so;
And Love said, laughing in her looks,
"Come kiss me at your leisure!"

The conscious sun, out o'er yon hill,
Rejoicing clos'd the day so;
Clasp'd in her arms, she murmur'd still,
"*Another* at your leisure!"]

ESTEEM FOR CHLORIS.

(ALDINE ED., 1839.)

AH, Chloris, since it may not be,
That thou of love wilt hear;
If from the lover thou maun flee,
Yet let the *friend* be dear.

Altho' I love my Chloris, mair
Than ever tongue could tell;
My passion I will ne'er declare—
I'll say, I wish thee well.

Tho' a' my daily care thou art,
And a' my nightly dream,
I'll hide the struggle in my heart,
And say it is esteem.

[There is considerable elegance in these lines, reminding one of the poet's manner in his earlier lines to Clarinda. In the *Aldine*, a note informs us that they were printed from the poet's holograph.]

SAW YOU MY DEAR, MY PHILLY?

Tune—"When she cam' ben she bobbit."

(CURRIE, 1800.)

O SAW ye my Dear, my Philly?
O saw ye my Dear, my Philly?
She's down i' the grove, she's wi' a new Love,
She *winna* come hame to her Willy. will not

What says she my Dear, my Philly?
What says she my Dear, my Philly?
She lets thee to wit she has thee forgot,
And for ever disowns thee, her Willy

O had I ne'er seen thee, my Philly!
O had I ne'er seen thee, my Philly!
As light as the air, and fause as thou's fair,
Thou's broken the heart o' thy Willy.

[This alteration of the song "Eppie Macnab," given at page 58, Vol. IV., was forwarded to Thomson on 19th October 1794. A month thereafter, the poet suggested the names "Mary" and "Harry" to be introduced instead of the proper names in the text; but Thomson never included the song in his collection.]

HOW LANG AND DREARY IS THE NIGHT!

Tune—"Cauld Kail in Aberdeen."

(GEO. THOMSON'S COLL., 1798.)

How lang and dreary is the night
When I am frae my Dearie!
I restless lie frae e'en to morn
Tho' I were ne'er sae weary.

Chorus.—For oh, her lanely nights are lang!
And oh, her dreams are *eerie;* lonely
And oh, her widow'd heart is sair,
That's absent frae her Dearie!

When I think on the lightsome days
I spent wi' thee, my Dearie;
And now what seas between us roar,
How can I be but eerie?
For oh, &c.

How slow ye move, ye heavy hours;
The joyless day how dreary:
It was na sae ye *glinted by,* passed away
When I was wi' my Dearie!
For oh, &c.

[The reader will see that this song is merely a new adaptation of the fine song given at p. 158, Vol. II. This alteration was made in order to carry out the poet's vow to have a song in honor of Chloris to suit the air "Cauld Kail." See Thomson Correspondence, page 260, Vol. V.]

INCONSTANCY IN LOVE.

Tune—"Duncan Gray."

(Geo. Thomson's Coll., 1798.)

Let not Woman e'er complain
Of inconstancy in love;
Let not Woman e'er complain
Fickle Man is apt to rove:
Look abroad thro' Nature's range,
Nature's mighty Law is change,
Ladies, would it not seem strange
Man should then a monster prove!

Mark the winds, and mark the skies,
  Ocean's ebb, and ocean's flow,
Sun and moon but set to rise,
  Round and round the seasons go.
Why then ask of silly Man
To oppose great nature's plan?
We'll be constant while we can—
  You can be no more you know.

[This song, sent on 19th October 1794, as English words for the tune "Duncan Gray" was produced at a time when the Muse of Burns was more than usually active. See Thomson Correspondence, page 261, Vol. V.]

THE LOVER'S MORNING SALUTE TO HIS MISTRESS.

Tune—"Deil tak the wars."

(CURRIE, 1800.)

SLEEP'ST thou, or wak'st thou, fairest creature?
  Rosy morn now lifts his eye,
Numbering *ilka* bud which Nature every
  Waters wi' the tears o' joy.
[1] Now, to the streaming fountain,
  Or up the heathy mountain,
The hart, hind, and roe, freely, wildly-wanton stray;
  In twining hazel bowers,
  Its lay the linnet pours,
  The *laverock* to the sky lark
  Ascends, wi' sangs o' joy;
While the sun and thou arise to bless the day!

Phœbus gilding the brow of morning,
  Banishes *ilk* darksome shade, each
Nature, gladdening and adorning;
  Such to me my lovely maid.

'When frae my Chloris parted,
Sad, cheerless, broken-hearted,
The night's gloomy shades, cloudy, dark, o'ercast my sky:
But when she charms my sight,
In pride of Beauty's light—
When thro' my very heart
Her burning glories dart;
'Tis then—'tis then I wake to life and joy!

[This song was transmitted to Thomson with the three preceding effusions on 19th October 1794, and thus he concluded his communication: "Since the above, I have been out in the country taking dinner with a friend, where I met with the lady whom I mentioned in the second page of this odds-and-ends of a letter. As usual, I got into song; and in returning home composed the following." He afterwards transcribed the song with some variations, and added:—"I could easily throw this into an English mould; but, to my taste, in the simple and tender of the Pastoral song, a sprinkling of the old Scots has an inimitable effect. The air, if I understand the expression of it properly, is the very native language of Simplicity, Tenderness and Love."

In his first sketch of the song, the following variations are found:—

'Now thro' the leafy woods,
And by the reeking floods,
Wild Nature's tenants freely, gladly stray;
The lintwhite in his bower,
Chants o'er the breathing flower,
The laverock, &c.

'When absent frae my Fair,
The murky shades of Care,
With starless gloom o'ercast my sullen sky;
But when in Beauty's light,
She meets my ravish'd sight—
When thro' my very heart
Her beaming glories dart,
'Tis then I wake to life, to light, and joy!]

THE WINTER OF LIFE.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1796.)

BUT lately seen in gladsome green,
The woods rejoic'd the day,
Thro' gentle showers, the laughing flowers
In double pride were gay:
But now our joys are fled
On winter blasts awa;
Yet maiden May, in rich array,
Again shall bring them a'.

But my white pow, nae kindly *thowe* thaw
Shall melt the snaws of Age;
My trunk of *eild*, *but* buss or beild,* old age without
Sinks in Time's wintry rage.
Oh, Age has weary days,
And nights o' sleepless pain:
Thou golden time o' Youthfu' prime,
Why comes thou not again!

[These pathetic stanzas were written for the *Museum*, and offered to Thomson on 19th October 1794, to be set to "an East Indian air," which the bard transmitted. It seems very evident that the vigor of the poet's constitution, before the close of this year 1794, began to give way under the tear and wear of disappointed hopes, and the effects of his occasional imprudent course of life. We can scarcely believe that the brawny farmer and exciseman had exhibited these symptoms so early as the autumn of 1791, as conceived by the late Sir Egerton Brydges in his imaginary interview with Burns at Ellisland at that period, in the following language:—"His great Beauty was his manly strength, and his energy and elevation of thought and feeling. I perceived in Burns's cheek the symptoms of an energy which had been pushed too far; and he had this feeling himself, for every now and then, he spoke of the grave as soon about to close over him."

The first hint we find in his correspondence of the constitutional decline referred to is in his letter to Mrs. Dunlop—25th June 1794

* My aged trunk without bush or shelter.

—where he says, "To tell you that I have been in poor health will not be excuse enough for neglecting your correspondence, though it is true. I am afraid that I am about to suffer for the follies of my youth. My medical friends threaten me with a flying gout; but I trust they are mistaken." The reader may remember the poet's words to Thomson, in May 1796, when he was approaching his end—"I have now reason to believe that my complaint is a flying gout, a sad business!" On 25th December of this year (1794), in writing to Mrs. Dunlop, he thus again reverts to his consciousness of physical decay—"I already begin to feel the rigid fibre and stiffening joints of old age coming fast o'er my frame." These feelings are freely depicted in the little song which forms our text, irresistibly recalling his prophetic words of warning, delivered to his youthful compeers in 1786, when the speaker was in the flush of youth and hope:— [See also page 331, *infra*.]

"Ye tiny elves that guiltless sport,
Like linnets in the bush,
Ye little know the ills ye court,
When manhood is your wish!
The losses, the crosses, that active man engage,
The fears all, the tears all, of dim declining Age!"]

BEHOLD, MY LOVE, HOW GREEN THE GROVES.

Tune—"My lodging is on the cold ground."

(CURRIE, 1800.)

November 1794.—On my visit the other day to my fair Chloris (that is the poetic name of the lovely goddess of my inspiration), she suggested an idea which, on my return from the visit, I wrought into the following song:

BEHOLD, my love, how green the groves,*
The primrose banks how fair;
The balmy gales awake the flowers,
And wave thy flowing hair.†

---

*In the MS. this reads, "My Chloris, mark how green," &c. but in Feb. 1796, the poet sanctioned the change thus:—"In my by-past songs I dislike one thing—the name of Chloris."

†The change from "flaxen" to *flowing hair*, is also thus sanctioned by Burns in the same letter to Thomson (Feb. 1796), "I have more amendments to propose. What you once mentioned of 'flaxen locks' is just: they cannot enter into an elegant description of beauty. Of this also again—God bless you.—*R. B.*"

The *lav'rock* shuns the palace gay, lark
And o'er the cottage sings:
For Nature smiles as sweet, I ween,
To Shepherds as to Kings.

Let minstrels sweep the skilfu' string,
In lordly lighted ha':
The Shepherd stops his simple reed,
Blythe in the *birken shaw*. birchen wood

The Princely revel may survey
Our rustic dance wi' scorn;
But are their hearts as light as ours,
Beneath the milk-white thorn!

The shepherd, in the flowery glen;
In shepherd's phrase, will woo:
The courtier tells a finer tale,
But is his heart as true!

These wild-wood flowers I've pu'd, to deck
That spotless breast o' thine:
The courtiers' gems may witness love,
But, 'tis na love like mine.

["How do you like the simplicity and tenderness of this pastoral? I think it pretty well. I like you for entering so candidly and so kindly into the story of 'ma chère amie.' Conjugal love is a passion which I deeply feel and highly venerate; but somehow it does not make such a figure in poesy as that other species of the passion, 'where love is liberty, and nature law.' Musically speaking, the first is an instrument of which the gamut is scanty and confined, but the tones inexpressibly sweet, while the last has powers equal to all the intellectual modulation of the human soul." See Thomson Correspondence, Vol. V., page 266.]

THE CHARMING MONTH OF MAY.

SONG, ALTERED FROM AN OLD ENGLISH ONE.

(GEO. THOMSON'S COLL., 1799.)

IT was the charming month of May,
When all the flow'rs were fresh and gay,
One morning, by the break of day,
The youthful, charming Chloe—
From peaceful slumber she arose,
Girt on her mantle and her hose,
And o'er the flow'ry mead she goes—
The youthful, charming Chloe—

Chorus.—Lovely was she by the dawn,
Youthful Chloe, charming Chloe
Tripping o'er the pearly lawn,
The youthful, charming Chloe.

The feather'd people you might see
Perch'd all around on every tree,
In notes of sweetest melody
They hail the charming Chloe;
Till, painting gay the eastern skies,
The glorious sun began to rise,
Outrival'd by the radiant eyes
Of youthful, charming Chloe.
Lovely was she, &c.

[See Thomson Correspondence, page 267, Vol. V.]

LASSIE WI' THE LINT-WHITE LOCKS.

Tune—"Rothiemurchie's Rant."

(CURRIE, 1800.)

Chorus.—Lassie wi' the lint-white locks,
Bonie lassie, artless lassie,
Wilt thou wi' me *tent* the flocks, watch
Wilt thou be my Dearie, O.

Now Nature *cleeds* the flowery lea, clothes
And a' is young and sweet like thee,
O wilt thou share its joys wi' me,
And say thou'lt be my Dearie, O.
Lassie wi' the, &c.

The primrose bank, the *wimpling* burn, winding
The cuckoo on the milk-white thorn,
The wanton lambs at early morn,
Shall welcome thee, my Dearie, O.*
Lassie wi' the, &c.

And when the welcome simmer shower
Has cheer'd *ilk* drooping little flower, each
We'll to the breathing woodbine-bower,
At sultry noon, my Dearie, O.
Lassie wi' the, &c.

When Cynthia lights, wi' silver ray,
The weary *shearer's* hameward way, reaper's
Thro' yellow waving fields we'll stray,
And talk o' love, my Dearie, O.
Lassie wi' the, &c.

And when the howling wintry blast
Disturbs my Lassie's midnight rest,
Enclaspèd to my faithfu' breast,
I'll comfort thee, my Dearie, O.
Lassie wi' the, &c.

* This stanza appears first in the edition of Mr. Douglas, 1877, having been omitted by all previous editors.—J. H.

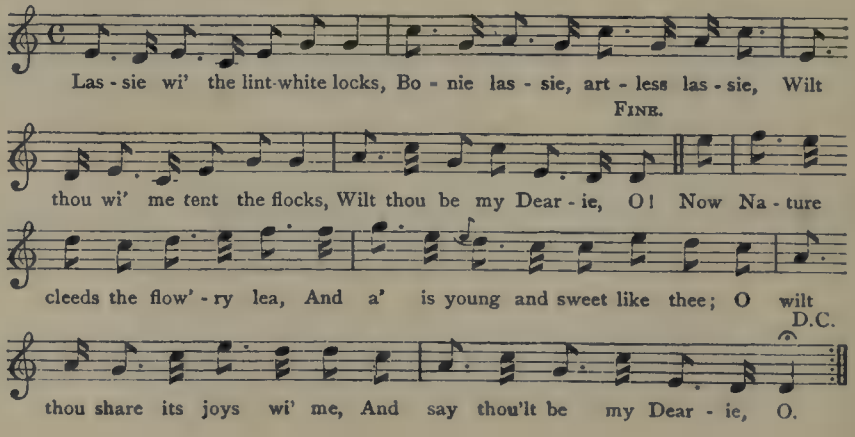
[The poet, in transmitting this fine effusion, thus wrote regarding it:—"This piece has at least the merit of a regular pastoral: the vernal morn, the summer noon, the autumnal evening, and the winter night are regularly rounded." We have no means of arriving at the reason why stanza second of the text has been omitted by Currie, Thomson, Cunningham, and Chambers, all of whom had access to the Thomson Correspondence. On the other hand, Currie gives the following variation of the closing verse, with a note intimating that "in some of the MSS. that stanza runs thus:—

"And should the howling wintry blast
Disturb my lassie's midnight rest;
I'll fauld thee to my faithfu' breast,
And comfort thee, my dearie O."

Cunningham has the following interesting note attached to this song:—"Those acquainted with the Poet's life and habits of study, will perceive much of both in the sweet song, 'Lassie wi' the lint-white locks.' Dumfries is a small town; a few steps carried Burns to green lanes, daisied brae-sides, and quiet stream banks. Men returning from labor were sure to meet him 'all under the light of the moon,' sauntering forth as if he had no aim; his hands behind his back, his hat turned up a little behind by the shortness of his neck, and noting all, yet seeming to note nothing. Those who got near enough to him without being seen, might hear him humming some old Scots air, and fitting verses to it—the scene and the season supplying the imagery, and the Jeans, the Nancies, and Phillises of his admiration, furnishing bright eyes, white hands, and waving tresses, as the turn of the song required."

"Rothiemurchie's Rant," to which the song in the text was composed, possesses a peculiar interest as being the melody which last floated thro' the conscious mind of Burns. Only nine days before his death he composed a pretty little song to the air.

We annex this admired melody, on a key which may suit voices of ordinary compass.]



DIALOGUE SONG.—PHILLY AND WILLY.

Tune—"The Sow's tail to Geordie."

(CURRIE, 1800.)

He. O Philly, happy be that day,
When roving thro' the gather'd hay,
My youthfu' heart was *stown* away, stolen
And by thy charms, my Philly.
She. O Willy, ay I bless the grove
Where first I own'd my maiden love,
Whilst thou did pledge the Powers above,
To be my ain dear Willie.
Both. For a' the joys that *gowd* can *gie*, gold give
I *dinna* care a single flie; do not
The { lad / lass } I love's the { lad / lass } for me,
And that's my ain dear { Willy / Philly }

He. As songsters of the early year,
Are *ilka* day mair sweet to hear, every
So ilka day to me mair dear
And charming is my Philly.
She. As on the brier the budding rose,
Still richer breathes and fairer blows,
So in my tender bosom grows
The love I bear my Willie.
Both. For a' the joys, &c.

He. The milder sun and bluer sky
That crown my harvest cares wi' joy,
Were ne'er sae welcome to my eye
As is a sight o' Philly.
She. The little swallow's wanton wing,
Tho' wafting o'er the flowery Spring,

Did near to me sic tidings bring,
As meeting o' my Willy.
Both. For a' the joys, &c.

He. The bee that thro' the sunny hour
Sips nectar in the op'ning flower,
Compar'd wi' my delight is poor,
Upon the lips o' Philly.
She. The woodbine in the dewy *weet*, wet (*moisture*)
When ev'ning shades in silence meet,
Is *nocht* sae fragrant or sae sweet nought
As is a kiss o' Willy.
Both. For a' the joys, &c.

He. Let fortune's wheel at random rin,
And fools may *tyne*, and knaves may win; lose
My thoughts are a' bound up on ane,
And that's my ain dear Philly.
She. What's a' the joys that gowd can gie?
I dinna care a single flie;
The lad I love's the lad for me,
And that's my ain dear Willy.
Both. For a' the joys, &c.

[In communicating the above to Thomson, on 19th November 1794, the bard thus wrote:—"This morning, . . . in my walk before breakfast, I finished my duet which you were pleased to praise so much. (September 1794.) . . . Tell me honestly how you like it, and point out whatever you think faulty. I am much pleased with your idea of singing our songs in alternate stanzas, and regret that you did not hint it to me sooner. In those that remain, I shall have it in my eye." See Thomson Correspondence, page 273, Vol. V.]

CONTENTED WI' LITTLE AND CANTIE WI' MAIR.

(GEO. THOMSON'S COLL., 1799.)

CONTENTED wi' little, and *cantie* wi' mair, happy
Whene'er I *forgather* wi' Sorrow and Care, meet
I gie them a *skelp* as they're creepin alang, spank
Wi' a cog* o' gude *swats* and an auld Scottish sang. ale
Chorus—Contented wi' little, &c.

I *whyles* claw the elbow o' troublesome thought; at times
But Man is a soger, and Life is a *faught;* fight
My mirth and good humor are coin in my *pouch*, pocket
And my Freedom's my *Lairdship* nae monarch dare touch. possession
Contented wi' little, &c.

A *towmond* o' trouble, should that be my *fa'*, twelvemonth / lot
A night o' gude fellowship mends it a':
When at the blythe end o' our journey at last,
Wha the deil ever thinks o' the road he has past?
Contented wi' little, &c.

Blind Chance, let her *snapper* and *stoyte* on her way; stagger stumble
Be't to me, be't frae me, e'en let the jade gae:
Come Ease, or come Travail, come Pleasure or Pain,
My warst word is: "Welcome, and welcome again!"
Contented wi' little, &c.

[This blythe song, communicated to Thomson by letter dated 19th November 1794, derives special interest from the fact that in the month of May following, the poet, while intimating to Thomson that some travelling artist had just executed a very successful miniature likeness of him ("what I am at this moment"), added—

* A wooden vessel out of which ale was commonly drunk.—J. H.

"I have some thoughts of suggesting to you to prefix a vignette taken from it, to my song, 'Contented wi' little and cantie wi' mair,' in order that the portrait of my face and the picture of my mind may go down the stream of time together." See page 184, *infra.*]

FAREWELL THOU STREAM.

Air—"Nansie's to the greenwood gane."

(GEO. THOMSON'S COLL., 1799.)

FAREWELL, thou stream that winding flows
Around Eliza's dwelling;
O mem'ry! spare the cruel throes
Within my bosom swelling.
Condemn'd to drag a hopeless chain
And yet in secret languish;
To feel a fire in every vein,
Nor dare disclose my anguish.

Love's veriest wretch, unseen, unknown,
I fain my griefs would cover;
The bursting sigh, th' *unweeting* groan, tearless
Betray the hapless lover.
I know thou doom'st me to despair,
Nor wilt, nor canst relieve me;
But, O Eliza, hear one prayer—
For pity's sake forgive me!

The music of thy voice I heard,
Nor wist while it enslav'd me!
I saw thine eyes, yet nothing fear'd,
Till fears no more had sav'd me:
Th' unwary sailor thus, aghast
The wheeling torrent viewing,
'Mid circling horrors sinks at last,
In overwhelming ruin.

[This is merely an amended version of the song beginning, "The last time I came o'er the moor," given at page 162, Vol. IV. Chambers observes that "the change most remarkable is the substitution of Eliza for Maria. The alienation of Mrs. Riddell, and the poet's resentment against her, must have rendered the latter name no longer tolerable to him; one can only wonder that, with his new and painful associations regarding that lady, he could endure the song itself, or propose laying it before the world." See Thomson Correspondence, page 269, Vol. V.]

CANST THOU LEAVE ME THUS, MY KATIE.

Tune—"Roy's Wife."

(GEO. THOMSON'S COLL., 1799.)

Chorus—Canst thou leave me thus, my Katie?
Canst thou leave me thus, my Katie?
Well thou know'st my aching heart,
And canst thou leave me thus, for pity?

Is this thy plighted, fond regard,
Thus cruelly to part, my Katie?
Is this thy faithful swain's reward—
An aching, broken heart, my Katie!
Canst thou leave me, &c.

Farewell! and ne'er such sorrows tear
That fickle heart of thine, my Katie!
Thou mayest find those will love thee dear,
But not a love like mine, my Katie.
Canst thou leave me, &c.

[Burns sent the above to Thomson on 19th November 1794, ■■ English verses to appear on the same page with Mrs. Grant of Carron's song, "Roy's wife of Aldivalloch." He says:—"Of *Roy's Wife* I have the original set as written by the lady who composed it." Dr. Currie, in form of a foot-note to the text, printed a composition of Mrs. Walter Riddell, intended for singing to the same air, which reads like ■ reply to Burns's song. It was found among

the poet's papers after his death, in the hand-writing of the authoress, and Chambers with great probability infers that our poet had sent Mrs. Riddell a copy of the present song, as "a poetical expression of the more gentle feeling he was now beginning to entertain towards her." He conjectures that the injured lady, regarding that act "as a sort of olive-branch held out to her, received it in no unkindly spirit," and interchanged compliments by answering the song in the same strain and sending it to Burns.

Since we had an opportunity of examining the original MS. of the Thomson Correspondence, we have become a convert to Chambers's opinion in this matter. Dr. Currie had an unfortunate tendency, in printing Burns's letters, to substitute his own words for those used by the poet, and thereby often altered the sense along with the phraseology. In September 1793 (upwards of a year before the song in the text was composed), Dr. Currie makes Burns thus write to Thomson:—"I have the original words of a song to the air of *Roy's Wife*, in the hand-writing of the lady who composed it; and it is superior to any edition of the song which the public has yet seen." This passage, apparently referring to the song by Mrs. Riddell given by Currie, seemed to convict Dr. Chambers of anachronism, in supposing that it was written as a reply to Burns's verses. On consulting the original manuscript, however, we find that the sentence quoted is purely Dr. Currie's own. Burns's words are these:—"Of *Roy's Wife*, I have the original set, as written by the lady who composed it," &c. Here the poet evidently means that he possessed Mrs. Grant's manuscript of the song as originally composed, which he thought superior to any edition of the song the public had yet seen.

Mr. Terry, or whoever else composed the words of the fine duet in the opera of *Rob Roy*, "Tho' you leave me now in sorrow," &c., has borrowed from the closing stanza of the song in the text, thus:—

"Ah ne'er forget, when friends are near,
This heart alone is thine for ever;
Thou mayest find those who love thee dear,
But not a love like mine—oh, never!"]

MY NANIE'S AWA.

Tune—"There'll never be peace till Jamie comes hame."

(GEO. THOMSON'S COLL., 1799.)

Now in her green mantle blythe Nature arrays,
And listens the lambkins that bleat o'er her braes,

While birds warble welcomes in ilka green *shaw*; grove
But to me it's delightless—my Nanie's awa.

The snawdrap and primrose our woodlands adorn,
And violets bathe in the *weet* o' the morn; dew
They pain my sad bosom, sae sweetly they blaw,
They mind me o' Nanie,—and Nanie's awa.

Thou lav'rock that springs frae the dews of the lawn,
The shepherd to warn o' the grey-breaking dawn,
And thou mellow *mavis* that hails the night-fa', thrush
Give over for pity—my Nanie's awa.

Come Autumn, sae pensive, in yellow and grey,
And soothe me wi' tidings o' Nature's decay:
The dark, dreary Winter, and wild-driving snaw
Alane can delight me—now Nanie's awa.

[The post-mark of the letter which communicated this admired song to Thomson is of date December 9th, 1794, and the poet says: 'I have just framed for you the following: how does it please you?" This song embalms the Poet's reminiscences of Clarinda, and is a sort of counterpart to "Wandering Willie."

In January 1788, the following eloquent passage in one of Clarinda's letters to Burns was justly admired by him; he said: "I shall certainly steal it, and set it in some future production, and get immortal fame by it." He did not forget the hint in his Elegy on Matthew Henderson; and it is again adopted in the present song:—"Oh, let the scenes of Nature remind you of Clarinda! In Winter, remember the dark shades of her fate—in Summer, the warmth of her friendship—in Autumn her glowing wishes to bestow plenty on all—and let Spring animate you with the hopes that your friend may yet surmount the wintry blasts of life, and revive to taste a spring-time of happiness."]

THE TEAR-DROP.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1796.)

WAE is my heart, and the tear's in my e'e;
Lang, lang has Joy been a stranger to me:
Forsaken and friendless, my burden I bear,
And the sweet voice o' Pity ne'er sounds in my ear.

Love, thou hast pleasures, and deep hae I lov'd;
Love, thou hast sorrows, and sair hae I prov'd;
But this bruisèd heart that now bleeds in my breast,
I can feel by its throbbings, will soon be at rest.

Oh, if I were—where happy I hae been—
Down by yon stream, and yon bonie castle-green;
For there he is wand'ring and musing on me,
Wha wad soon dry the tear-drop that clings to my e'e.

[This pathetic little ballad is in Burns's best manner, and yet it has hitherto escaped the notice it deserves. The stanza in Clarinda's *Ae fond Kiss*, "Had we never lov'd sae kindly," &c., which has been so highly commended as "the alpha and omega of feeling," is nearly rivalled by the second verse of the present text. The third stanza reads almost like a parody of the closing verse of Lady G. Baillie's fine ballad, "Were na my heart light, I wad dee."

> "Were I young for thee, as I hae been,
> We sud hae been gallopin down on yon green;
> Linkin it over the lily-white lea—
> And O were I again young for thee!"

The melody of one strain which is fitted to this song in the *Museum* was recovered by Burns. It is a plaintive little tune; but the words are worthy of the highest effort of musical composition.]

FOR THE SAKE O' SOMEBODY.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1796.)

My heart is sair—I dare na tell,
My heart is sair for Somebody;
I could wake a winter night
For the sake o' Somebody.
O-hon! for Somebody!
O-hey! for Somebody!
I could range the world around,
For the sake o' Somebody.

Ye Powers that smile on virtuous love,
O, sweetly smile on Somebody!
Frae *ilka* danger keep him free, every
And send me safe my Somebody!
O-hon! for Somebody!
O-hey! for Somebody!
I wad do—what wad I not?
For the sake o' Somebody.

[The poet, in a letter to Miss Chalmers of November 1787, writing about the songs he had composed in compliment to Charlotte Hamilton and her, for the second volume of *Johnson*, says, "I am afraid the song of *Somebody* will come too late." This has led to the inference that this song is in honor of her; Mr. Douglas, however, thinks the words in the letter simply refer to the song, "My Peggy's face, my Peggy's form," respecting which Burns wrote to Johnson saying, "I have a very strong private reason for wishing it in the second volume." That song however was omitted through some cause or another, and did not find a place in the *Museum* till after the poet's death.

The editor of Hamilton's "Select Songs of Scotland" thus wrote regarding the present song:—"It shows how perfect was Burns's idea of what was necessary to constitute a lasting and happy union between words and music. We do not know a single song where the union is so happy. The sentiment of the music becomes elevated or pathetic just at the proper places, and seems as if no other medium of expression could ever by any chance be dreamt of than that which our national poet chose for his fine love words."]

A MAN'S A MAN FOR A' THAT.

Tune—"For a' that."

(CURRIE, 1800.)

Is there for honest Poverty
  That hings his head, an' a' that;
The coward slave—we pass him by,
  We dare be poor for a' that!
For a' that, an' a' that,
  Our toils obscure an' a' that,
The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
  The Man's the *gowd* for a' that.* gold

What though on hamely fare we dine,
  Wear hoddin grey,† an' a' that;
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
  A Man's a Man for a' that:
For a' that, an' a' that,
  Their tinsel show, an' a' that;
The honest man, tho' e'er sae poor,
  Is king o' men for a' that.

Ye see yon *birkie* ca'd "a lord," proud fellow
  Wha struts, an' stares, an' a' that;
Tho' hundreds worship at his word,
  He's but a *coof* for a' that: blockhead

---

* In the MS. Thomson has a foolish note, thus:—"This first verse is obscurely worded, and therefore I think the song should begin at the second verse.—*G. T.*" Chambers quotes from Wycherley's *Plain Dealer*, which Burns probably never saw, a thought similar to that conveyed in the last two lines of this stanza:—"I weigh the man, not his title; 'tis not the king's stamp can make the metal better or heavier. Your lord is a leaden shilling, which you bend every way, and debases the stamp he bears."—J. H. Currie altered the word "hings," in line second, to *hangs*; and the expression "The Man to Man," in the last couplet of the song, he changed to "That man to man." These seem improvements.

† Coarse woolen grey cloth, formerly much worn by the common people in Scotland. The color is produced by mixing the wool of one black fleece with that of a dozen white ones.—J. H.

For a' that an' a' that,
  His ribband, star, an' a' that;
The man o' independent mind
  He looks an' laughs at a' that.

A prince can mak a belted knight,
  A marquis, duke, an' a' that;
But an honest man's *aboon* his might, above
  Gude faith, he *mauna fa'* that. must not attempt
For a' that, an' a' that,
  Their dignities an' a' that;
The pith o' sense, an' pride o' worth,
  Are higher rank than a' that.*

Then let us pray that come it may,
  (As come it will for a' that,)
That Sense and Worth, o'er a' the earth,
  Shall bear the *gree*, an' a' that. pre-eminence
For a' that, an' a' that,
  It's comin yet for a' that,
The Man to Man, the world o'er,
  Shall brothers be for a' that.

(For music, see Thomson Correspondence, page 283, Vol. V.)

[This extraordinary effusion was produced on 1st January 1795, a fact we are enabled to determine from the poet's letter to Thomson of 15th January which enclosed it, thus:—"The foregoing has lain by me this fortnight, for want of a spare moment. . . . I do not give you the song for your book, but merely by way of *vive la bagatelle;* for the piece is not really poetry." The performance, nevertheless, is so characteristic of Burns, that of all the poems and songs he ever wrote, it could be least spared from a collection of his works. Beranger of France, Goethe of Germany, and indeed, people abroad of every nation, quote its generous and powerful couplets whenever they speak of Burns. The French Revolution was now emerging from its bloody baptism. On 28th July preceding, Robespierre, with his chief partisans, perished on the guillotine which they had so freely and wantonly kept in perpetual motion.

* Currie, and other editors, have weakened the effect of this line by printing the word "rank" in the plural. Chambers, in 1852, noted this.

In October the Jacobin Club had been suppressed, and the trials of Horne Tooke, of Hardy, Thelwall, and others, for treason in England, closely followed. The sentiments therefore which are embodied in Burns's song found an echo in many a British heart.]

(The radical LIBERTY FEVER of our Bard, so broadly exhibited about thirty pages back, has now taken a turn of more rational form, and the noble sentiments of this glorious song are in strong contrast, for practical independence, compared with the Utopian aspirations of "The Tree of Liberty," at page 13, *supra*.—G. G.)

CRAIGIEBURN WOOD.

SECOND VERSION.

(GEO. THOMSON'S COLL., 1798.)

SWEET *fa's* the eve on Craigieburn, falls
And blythe awakes the morrow;
But a' the pride o' Spring's return
Can yield me *nocht* but sorrow. nought

I see the flowers and spreading trees,
I hear the wild birds singing;
But what a weary wight can please,
And Care his bosom wringing!

Fain, fain would I my griefs impart,
Yet dare na for your anger;
But secret love will break my heart,
If I conceal it langer.

If thou refuse to pity me,
If thou shalt love another,
When yon green leaves fade frae the tree,
Around my grave they'll wither.

[This is little else than a smooth abridgement of the song of same title given at page 283, Vol. V., the history of which, and music of the words, is there also supplied. These verses were forwarded to Thomson in the same letter that communicated "A man's a man for a' that." The poet was then engaged in the work of Supervisor of Excise, devolving on him in consequence of the illness of Mr. Findlater, his immediate superior officer, which extra employment seems to have lasted nearly four months.

About that period the poet thus wrote to one of his patrons, regarding his prospects of Excise advancement:—"I am on the supervisor's list, and as we come on by precedency, in two or three years I shall be at the head of that list, and be appointed of *course*. *Then*, a FRIEND might be of service to me in getting me into a place of the kingdom which I would like. A supervisor's income varies from about £120 to £200 a year; but the business is an incessant drudgery, and would be nearly a complete bar to every species of literary pursuit. The moment I am appointed supervisor, in the common routine, I may be nominated on the Collector's list; and this is always a business of purely political patronage. A collectorship varies much, from better than £200 to near £1000 a year. A life of literary leisure, with a decent competency, is the summit of my wishes." Thus it appears that even Burns amused himself at times with "building castles in the air," which, alas! were never to take substantial form.]

VERSICLES OF 1795.

THE SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

THE Solemn League and Covenant
Now brings a smile, now brings a tear;
But sacred Freedom, too, was theirs:
If thou'rt a slave, indulge thy sneer.

[The version of these lines given by Cunningham may have been picked up from oral tradition; for it does not correspond with the poet's manuscript, still to be seen at the Mechanics' Institute of Dumfries. The public is indebted to Mr. William M'Dowall, editor of the *Dumfries Standard*, for the discovery of the original. The books in the public Library of which Burns was a member are now the property of the Dumfries and Maxwelltown Mechanics' Institution, and the poet had evidently borrowed the 13th vol. of Sir John Sinclair's Statistical Account of Scotland. Under the head "Balmaghie" a notice is given of several martyred Covenanters belonging to that parish, and the rude yet expressive lines engraved on their tombstones are quoted at length. The reverend clergyman who compiled the description, in referring to these

rhymed inscriptions somewhat sneeringly observes that their authors "no doubt conceived they were making good poetry."

Burns administered a rebuke to the compiler by pencilling on the opposite margin the lines which form the text. They are not signed or initialed; but the handwriting of the bard is unmistakeable.

Burns had little sympathy with the narrow conscientious scruples of the Covenanters; but he admired the determined stand they made to secure political freedom. The following version of the compliment he paid them is even more forcibly expressive of his sympathy with their struggle for liberty of conscience:—

"The solemn League and Covenant
Cost Scotland blood—cost Scotland tears;
But it sealèd Freedom's sacred cause—
If thou'rt a slave, indulge thy sneers."]

COMPLIMENTS TO JOHN SYME OF RYEDALE.

LINES SENT WITH A PRESENT OF A DOZEN OF PORTER.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

O HAD the malt thy strength of mind,
Or hops the flavor of thy wit,
'Twere drink for first of human kind,
A gift that ev'n for Syme were fit.

JERUSALEM TAVERN, DUMFRIES.

INSCRIPTION ON A GOBLET.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

THERE'S Death in the cup, so beware!
Nay, more—there is danger in touching;
But who can avoid the fell snare,
The man and his wine's so bewitching!

[This is said to have been inscribed by Burns on a crystal goblet in the house of Mr. Syme, when pressed to stay and drink more.]

APOLOGY FOR DECLINING AN INVITATION TO DINE.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

No more of your guests, be they titled or not,
And cookery the first in the nation;
Who is proof to thy personal converse and wit,
Is proof to all other temptation.

[Dr. Currie gives the date of this last Epigram to have been 17th December 1795, when Burns was in ill-health. Mr. Syme had invited him to dine, and held out to him the temptation of the best company and the finest cookery. Mr. John Syme was distributor of stamps in Dumfries, and had his office on the ground floor of the tenement in which Burns took up his residence on first coming to Dumfries. Being a man of literary tastes and accomplishments, the poet became very intimate with him, and frequently submitted his productions to the criticism of his friend. Chambers remarks that "Syme, like many other men of lively temperament, could not boast of historical accuracy in his narration of events. He most undoubtedly was carried away by his imagination in his statement regarding the composition of Bruce's Address to his troops. So also he appears to have been misled in a less agreeable, though equally picturesque story, about Burns having, in a moment of passion, drawn a sword-cane against him in his own house."

In 1829, Syme published some observations regarding Burns's personal appearance, and a portion of his picture we may here give:—"His eyes and lips—the first remarkable for fire, and the second for flexibility—formed at all times an index of his mind, and, as sunshine or shade predominated, you might have told, *à priori*, whether the company was to be favored with a scintillation of wit, or a sentiment of benevolence, or a burst of fiery indignation. In his animated moments, and particularly when his anger was roused by instances of tergiversation, meanness or tyranny, they were actually like coals of living fire."]

EPITAPH FOR MR. GABRIEL RICHARDSON.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

HERE Brewer Gabriel's fire's extinct,
And empty all his barrels:
He's blest, if, as he brew'd, he drink,
In upright, honest morals.

[Burns must of necessity have had frequent business transactions with this gentleman, who was the principal brewer in Dumfries at the period. He was provost of the burgh in 1802–1803. It appears that the eldest son of the poet and the eldest son of the brewer entered on the same day as pupils with Mr. Gray, at the Grammar School. The provost's son became a great traveller and naturalist, and ultimately received the honor of knighthood. Sir John Richardson was born at Nith Place, Dumfries, in 1787, and survived to 1865. The above epigram was inscribed by the poet on a crystal goblet, which is still in possession of Lady Richardson.

We do not regard it as one of our poet's most successful efforts in that line. The point turns on the homely proverb, "Just as ye brew, so shall ye drink."]

EPIGRAM ON MR. JAMES GRACIE.

(KILMARNOCK ED., 1871.)

GRACIE, thou art a man of worth,
O be thou Dean for ever!
May he be d——d to hell henceforth,
Who *fauts* thy weight or measure! challenges

[The subject of this compliment was a respected banker in Dumfries and Dean of Guild for the burgh. Among the last occasions on which Burns used his pen was that of inscribing a note of thanks addressed to him, for his kind offer to send a carriage to bring the dying bard from Brow to Dumfries.]

INSCRIPTION AT FRIARS CARSE HERMITAGE,

TO THE MEMORY OF ROBERT RIDDELL.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

To RIDDELL, much lamented man,
This ivied cot was dear;
Wand'rer, dost value matchless worth?
This ivied cot revere.

[We are told that the first time Burns rode up Nithside after the death of his friend of Friars' Carse, he dismounted and went into the hermitage, and engraved these lines on one of its window-panes.]

BONIE PEG-A-RAMSAY.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1803.)

CAULD is the e'enin blast
O' Boreas o'er the pool,
An' *dawin* it is dreary, dawning
When *birks* are bare at *Yule*. birches Christmas

Cauld blaws the e'enin blast,
When bitter bites the frost,
And, in the *mirk* and dreary drift, dark
The hills and glens are lost:

Ne'er sae murky blew the night
That drifted o'er the hill,
But bonie Peg-a-Ramsay
Gat grist to her mill. got

[The title of this snatch of song is very ancient, as we may infer from its being quoted in "Twelfth Night," *Act* ii. *Scene* 3. Tom D'Urfey in his "Pills," gives a rude version of the old song, in

which we can scarcely find one verse that is decent enough to quote. The following may furnish some idea of it:—

"Some do call her Peggy, and some do call her Jane,
And some do call her 'Cross-ma-loof,' but they are a' mistaen;
For Peggy is a sonsie lass that thrives by her mill;
And she is fullest occupied, when men are standing still.
With a hey trolodel, hey trolodel, merry goes the mill."]

(Waddell tells us it is one of those songs which Burns only slightly retouched.)

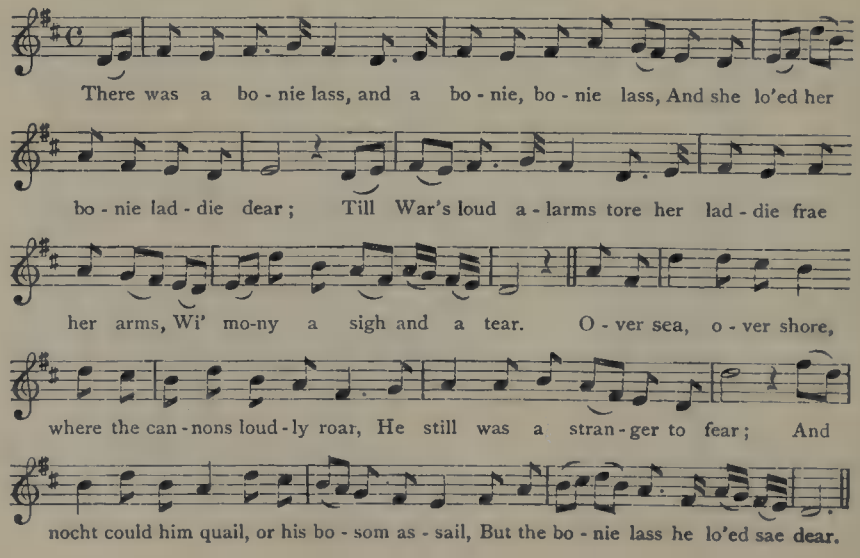
OVER SEA, OVER SHORE.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1803.)

THERE was a bonie lass, and a bonie, bonie lass,
And she *loed* her bonie laddie dear; loved
Till War's loud alarms tore her laddie frae her arms,
Wi' mony a sigh, and a tear.

Over sea, over shore, where the cannons loudly roar,
He still was a stranger to fear;
And *nocht* could him quail, or his bosom assail, nought
But the bonie lass he loed sae dear.

[There is a nice touch of sentiment about this little song, especially when united to its music, which Stenhouse informs us is a favorite slow march, and accordingly we annex it.]



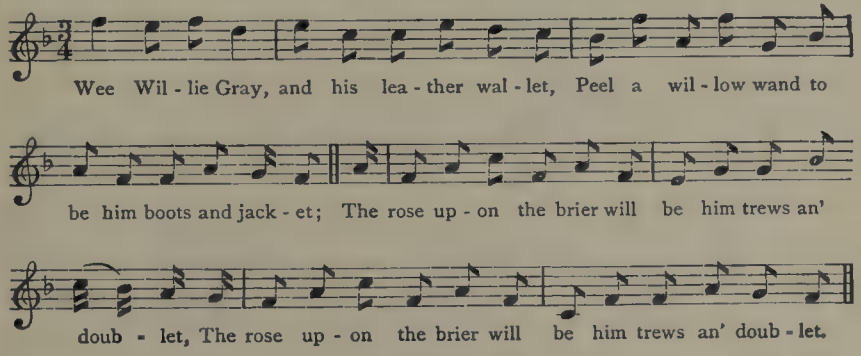
WEE WILLIE GRAY.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1803.)

WEE Willie Gray, and his leather wallet,
Peel a willow wand to be him boots and jacket;
The rose upon the brier will be him *trews* an' doublet, trowsers
The rose upon the brier will be him trews an' doublet.

Wee Willie Gray, and his leather wallet,
Twice a lily-flower will be him *sark* and cravat; shirt
Feathers of a *flee* wad feather up his bonnet, fly
Feathers of a flee wad feather up his bonnet.

[This little Nursery chant was furnished by our poet to fit an old air called "Wee Totum Fogg," which we annex.]



O AY MY WIFE SHE DANG ME.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1803.)

Chorus—O ay my wife she *dang me*, knocked me about
An' aft my wife she *bang'd* me, beat
If ye gie a woman a' her will,
Gude faith! she'll soon *o'er-gang* ye. master

ON peace an' rest my mind was bent,
And, fool I was! I married;
But never honest man's intent
Sae cursedly miscarried.
O ay my wife, &c.

Some *sairie* comfort at the last, sorry
When a' *thir* days are done, man, these
My "pains o' hell" on earth is past,
I'm sure o' bliss *aboon*, man. above
O ay my wife, &c.

[This is one of the very few bitter songs Burns has written against womankind.

The tune to which this song is set in the *Museum*, is old but not striking enough to warrant reprinting here.]

GUDE ALE KEEPS THE HEART ABOON.*

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1803.)

Chorus—O gude ale comes and gude ale goes;
Gude ale *gars* me sell my hose, makes
Sell my hose, and pawn my *shoon*— shoes
Gude ale keeps my heart aboon!

I HAD *sax owsen* in a pleugh, six oxen
And they drew a' weel eneugh:
I sell'd them a' just ane by ane—
Gude ale keeps the heart aboon!
O gude ale comes, &c.

Gude ale hauds me bare and busy,
Gars me *moop wi'* the servant hizzie, consort with
Stand i' the stool when I hae dune—
Gude ale keeps the heart aboon!
O gude ale comes, &c.

* Good ale keeps the heart from sinking.—J. H.

[The bulk of this song is by Burns, although a line here and there belongs to an older strain of even less delicacy. The closing verse has reference to the old ecclesiastical mode of punishing a certain class of offences by placing the culprit on a "cutty stool" before the congregation in church. The air to which it is sung is very effective, and goes by the jolly title, "The bottom o' the punch-bowl."]

O STEER HER UP AN' HAUD HER GAUN.*

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1803.)

O STEER her up, an' haud her gaun,
  Her mither's at the mill, jo;
An' *gin* she *winna* tak a man, — *gin* will not
  E'en let her tak her will, jo.
First *shore* her wi' a gentle kiss, — *shore* try
  And ca' anither gill, jo;
An' gin she tak the thing amiss,
  E'en let her *flyte* her fill, jo. — *flyte* scold

O steer her up, an' be na *blate*, — *blate* backward
  An' gin she tak it ill, jo,
Then leave the lassie till her fate,
  And time nae langer spill, jo:
Ne'er break your heart for *ae rebuke*, — *ae rebuke* one rebuff
  But think upon it still, jo,
That gin the lassie winna do't,
  Ye'll find anither will, jo.

[Excepting the first four lines, which belong to an ancient song of same title and subject, the song is by Burns. The tune is lively; but of considerable range. In Tom D'Urfey's collection, we find something very like the above, thus:—

"Take not a woman's anger ill,
For this should be your comfort still,
That if she won't, another will.

* Stir her up and keep her going.

Tho' she that's foolish may deny,
You'll find a wiser by and by;
And should the next you meet seem shy,
Just persevere, and she'll comply."]

THE LASS O' ECCLEFECHAN.

Tune—"Jack o' Latin."

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1796.)

GAT ye me, O gat ye me, — got
O gat ye me wi' naething?
Rock an reel, and spinning wheel, — distaff and small wheel
A *mickle* quarter bason: — large
Bye attour, my Gutcher has
A heich house and a laich ane,
A' forbye my bonie sel,
The toss o' Ecclefechan.*

O *haud* your tongue now, Lucky Lang, — hold
O haud your tongue and *jauner;* — idle talk
I *held the gate* till you I met, — kept the right way
Syne I began to wander: — then
I *tint* my whistle and my sang, — lost
I tint my peace and pleasure;
But your green *graff*, now Lucky Lang, — grave
Wad *airt* me to my treasure. — direct

[The supervising duties which devolved on Burns in consequence of Findlater's illness, brought him in February 1795 to the village of Ecclefechan, in Annandale, where he was storm-stayed by a heavy fall of snow. In a letter which he penned to Thomson from the Inn, he described it as an "unfortunate, wicked little village," in which he was forced either to get drunk to forget his miseries, or to hang himself to get rid of them; and so he added, "like a prudent man, of two evils I have chosen the least, and am very drunk at your service." Dr. Currie, in a foot-note said: "The poet

* Besides my grandsire has a high house and a low one, all in addition to my bonie self, the toast (belle) of Ecclefechan.—J. H.

must have been tipsy indeed to abuse sweet Ecclefechan at this rate." Currie was naturally partial to a locality so near his own birth-place. The poet's intimate associate, William Nicol of the Edinburgh High School, was born in Ecclefechan; and it is a memorable fact that Thomas Carlyle was born in the same village on the 4th of December 1795, the same year that Burns happened to be "snowed-up" there.

It is a curious circumstance that the sin of intemperance should have been associated with that village in the poet's mind. In one of his songs in the Merry Muses (too gross for publication) he thus refers to it:—

> "Then up we raise, and took the road,
> And in by Ecclefechan,
> Where the brandy-stoup we *gar'd* it clink, made
> And strang-beer ream the *quech* in."] drinking-vessel

O LET ME IN THIS *AE* NIGHT.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

O LASSIE, are ye sleepin yet,
Or are ye *waukin*, I wad wit? awake
For Love has bound me hand an' *fit*, foot
And I would fain be in, jo.

Chorus—O let me in this ae night,
This ae, ae, ae night;
O let me in this ae night,
I'll no come back again, jo![1]

O hearst thou not the[2] wind an' *weet?* rain
Nae star blinks thro' the driving sleet;
Tak pity on my weary feet,
And shield me frae the rain, jo.
O let me in, &c.

The bitter blast that round me blaws,
Unheeded howls, unheeded fa's;

The cauldness o' thy heart's the cause
Of a' my care and *pine*, jo. pain
O let me in, &c.

HER ANSWER.

O tell na me o' wind an' rain,
Upbraid na me wi' cauld disdain,
Gae back the *gate* ye cam again, go way
I winna let ye in, jo.

Chorus—I tell you now this ae night,
This ae, ae, ae night;
And ance for a' this ae night,
I winna let ye in, jo.

The *snellest* blast, at *mirkest* hours, sharpest darkest
That round the pathless wand'rer pours
Is *nocht* to what poor she endures, nought
That's trusted faithless man, jo.
I tell you now, &c.

The sweetest flower that deck'd the mead,
Now trodden like the vilest weed—
Let simple maid the lesson read
The *weird* may be her ain, jo. fate
I tell you now, &c.

The bird that charm'd his summer day,
Is now the cruel Fowler's prey;
Let witless, trusting Woman say
How aft her fate's the same, jo!
I tell you now, &c.

[In August 1793, Burns had sent to Thomson a dressed-up version of the old song, "O let me in this ae night," usually found in the collections of last century; but it did not give satisfaction. The

present version was sent from Ecclefechan on February 9th, 1795. The following variations show two different readings in Currie's edition, which appear to be Thomson's own, for our text corresponds with the poet's MS.

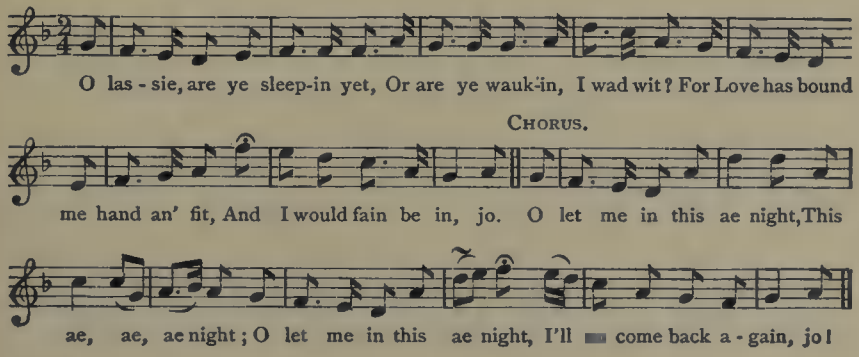
[1] For pity's sake, this ae night,
O rise and let me in, jo.

[2] Thou hear'st the winter.

In the MS. the poet himself suggests the following as an improvement on the closing verse; but neither Thomson nor Currie adopted it:—

The bird that charm'd his summer day,
And now the cruel Fowler's prey—
Let that to witless woman say,
"The gratefu' heart of Man," jo!

The melody of this song is one of the finest of Scotland's national airs, and as Johnson's set is superior to Thomson's, or any other that we have seen, we here subjoin it. Burns, in one of his letters, cautions Thomson to set the chorus to the *high* part of the tune; but with his usual perversity he did the opposite.



I'LL AY *CA'* IN BY YON TOWN.

Air—"I'll gang nae mair to yon toun."

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1796.)

Chorus—I'll ay ca' in by yon town,
And by yon garden-green again;
I'll ay ca' in by yon town,
And see my bonie Jean again.

There's nane shall ken, there's nane can guess
What brings me back the *gate* again, road
But she, my fairest, faithfu' lass,
And *stow'nlins* we sall meet again. stealthily
I'll ay ca' in, &c.

She'll wander by the *aiken* tree, oaken
When trystin time* draws near again;
And when her lovely form I see,
O *haith!* she's doubly dear again. faith
I'll ay ca' in, &c.

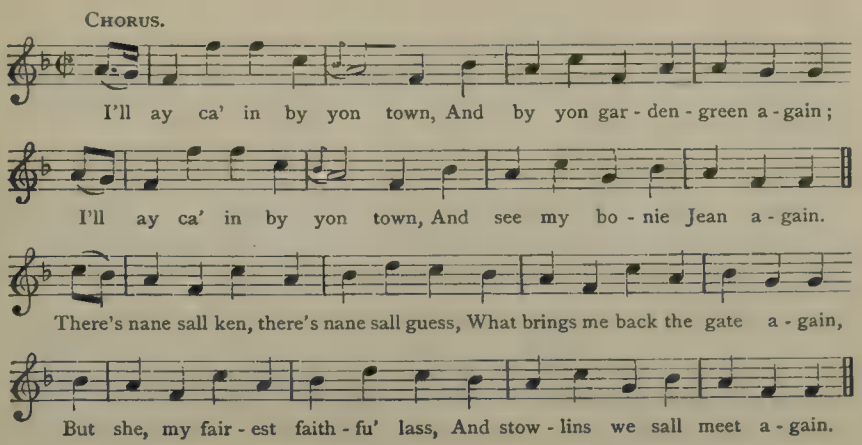
[This beautiful little lyric, supplied off-hand to Johnson, will perhaps be more admired than the labored version which follows. It may have been inspired either by his own wife, or by Jean Lorimer; most likely the latter, for she was the author's favorite model at this period. He thus wrote from Ecclefechan on 7th Feb. 1795, recommending Thomson to adopt the air:—If you think it worthy of your attention, I have a fair dame in my eye, to whom I would consecrate it. Try it with this doggrel, till I give you a better:—

Chorus—O wat ye wha's in yon town
Ye see the e'enin sun upon;
The dearest maid's in yon town,
That e'enin sun is shinin on.

O sweet to me yon spreading tree,
Where Jeanie wanders aft *her lane;* alone
The hawthorn flower that shades her bower,
O when shall I behold again!

The reader may require to be informed, in reference to this and the following song, that the expression "yon town," so frequently repeated, does not necessarily apply to a town, or small city: a farm-steading is commonly so denominated in Scotland. The melody, in slowish time, flows finely with the words. The following set of the melody is from Johnson's *Museum.*]

* Appointed time of meeting.



O WAT YE WHA'S IN YON TOWN.

Tune—"I'll gang nae mair to yon town."

(Johnson's Museum, 1796.)

Chorus—O *wat* ye wha's in yon town, wot
Ye see the e'enin sun upon,
The dearest maid's[1] in yon town,
That e'ening sun is shinin on.

Now haply down yon gay green *shaw*, wood
She wanders by yon spreading tree;
How blest ye flowers that round her blaw,
Ye catch the glances o' her e'e!
O wat ye wha's, &c.

How blest ye birds that round her sing,
And welcome in the blooming year;
And doubly welcome be the Spring,
The season to my Jeanie[2] dear.
O wat ye wha's, &c.

The sun *blinks blythe* in yon town, glances cheerfully
Among the broomy *braes* sae green;[3] knolls
But my delight in yon town,
And dearest pleasure, is my Jean.[4]
O wat ye wha's, &c.

Without my Fair,[5] not a' the charms
O' Paradise could yield me joy;
But give me Jeanie[6] in my arms
And welcome Lapland's dreary sky!
O wat ye wha's, &c.

My cave wad be a lover's bower,
Tho' raging Winter rent the air;
And she a lovely little flower,
That I wad *tent* and shelter there. guard
O wat ye wha's, &c.

O sweet is she in yon town,
The sinkin Sun's gane down upon;
A fairer than's in yon town,
His setting beam ne'er shone upon.
O wat ye wha's, &c.

If angry Fate is sworn my foe,
And suff'ring I am doom'd to bear;
I careless quit aught else below,
But spare, O spare me Jeanie[7] dear.
O wat ye wha's, &c.

For while life's dearest blood is warm,
Ae thought frae her shall ne'er depart,
And she, as fairest is her form,
She has the truest, kindest heart.
O wat ye wha's, &c.

[It was no unusual thing with Burns to shift the devotion of verse from one person to another. What was composed under the influence of Jean Lorimer's charms, could easily be made applicable to any other personage he might desire to compliment. Accordingly, by changing the name "Jeanie," to *Lucy*, he made these verses serve as a tributary offering to the wife of Richard A. Oswald, Esq. of Auchencruive, then residing in Dumfries. That gentleman had been about two years married to a celebrated beauty, Miss Lucy Johnston, daughter of Wynne Johnston, Esq., of Hilton, and it

occurred to our poet that the family would be pleased with this dedication. In a letter to Mr. John Syme, enclosing a copy of the song, he explains thus:—"I have endeavored to do justice to what would be Mr. Oswald's feelings, on seeing, in the scene I have drawn, the habitation of his Lucy. As I am a good deal pleased with the performance, I, in my first fervor, thought of sending it to Mrs. Oswald, but on second thoughts, perhaps what I offer as the honest incense of genuine respect, might be construed into some modification or other of that servility which my soul abhors."

A year or two after this period, Mrs. Oswald fell into declining health, and in January 1798, died at Lisbon at an age little exceeding thirty.

The variations rendered necessary for the altered heroineship of the song are these:

[1] dame's. [2] Lucy. [3] And on yon bonie braes of Ayr.
[4] bliss is Lucy dear. [5] Love. [6] Lucy. [7] Lucy.]

BALLADS ON MR. HERON'S ELECTION, 1795.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

"SIR,—I enclose you some copies of a couple of political ballads, one of which, I believe, you have never seen. Would to heaven I could make you master of as many votes in the Stewartry! (of Kirkcudbright.) In order to bring my humble efforts to bear with more effect on the foe, I have privately printed a good many copies of both ballads, and have sent them among friends all about the country."—*Letter to Mr. Heron, of Kerroughtree.*

BALLAD FIRST.

WHOM will you send to London town,
To Parliament and a' that?
Or wha in a' the country round
The best deserves to fa' that?
For a' that, and a' that,
Thro' Galloway and a' that,
Where is the Laird or belted Knight
That best deserves to fa' that?

Wha sees Kerroughtree's open yett,
(And wha is't never saw that?)
Wha ever wi' Kerroughtree met,
And has a doubt of a' that?
For a' that, and a' that,
Here's Heron yet for a' that!
The independent patriot,
The honest man, and a' that.

Tho' wit and worth, in either sex,
Saint Mary's Isle* can shaw that,
Wi' Dukes and Lords let Selkirk mix,
And weel does Selkirk *fa'* that. become
For a' that, and a' that,
Here's Heron yet for a' that!
The independent commoner
Shall be the man for a' that.

But why should we to Nobles *jouk*, cringe
And is't against the law, that?
For why, a Lord may be a *gowk*, fool
Wi' ribband, star and a' that,
For a' that, and a' that,
Here's Heron yet for a' that!
A Lord may be a lousy loun,
Wi' ribband, star and a' that.

A beardless boy comes o'er the hills,
Wi' uncle's purse and a' that;
But we'll hae ane frae mang oursels,
A man we ken, and a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
Here's Heron yet for a' that!
For we're not to be bought and sold,
Like *naigs*, and *nowte*, and a' that. horses cattle

* The seat of the Earl of Selkirk, on the river Dee, Kirkcudbrightshire.—J. H.

Then let us drink—The Stewartry,
Kerroughtree's laird, and a' that,
Our representative to be,
For weel he's worthy a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
Here's Heron yet for a' that!
A House of Commons such as he,
They wad be blest that saw that.

[The death of General Stewart, M.P. for the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, in January 1795, created a vacancy in the representation, and in the course of February and March a contest for the election caused much local excitement, in which Burns mixed with his customary zeal. The Tory candidate was Mr. Thomas Gordon, of Balmaghie, himself a young man of moderate property and influence, but well-backed by his uncle, Mr. Murray of Broughton, one of the wealthiest proprietors in the south of Scotland, and helped also by the interest of the Earl of Galloway. The Whig candidate was Mr. Heron of Heron and Kerroughtree, to whom Burns had paid a visit in June 1794. Our poet all the more keenly sided with Mr. Heron, when he saw ranged on the opposite side, some of his own cherished aversions, such as the Earl of Galloway and John Bushby, of Tinwald Downs.]

BALLAD SECOND—ELECTION DAY.

Tune—"Fy, let us a' to the Bridal."

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

Fy, let us a' to Kirkcudbright,
For there will be bickerin' there;
For Murray's *light horse* are to muster,
And O how the heroes will swear!
And there will be *Murray*, Commander,*
And Gordon,† the battle to win;

* Mr. Murray of Broughton. This gentleman had left his wife and eloped with a lady of rank. In the last stanza of the piece Burns speaks of him as giving the remainder of his life to the Lord, after "foundering himself among harlots."—J. H.

† Thos. Gordon of Balmaghie, the Tory candidate, a nephew of Murray.

Like brothers they'll stand by each other,
Sae knit in alliance and kin.

And there will be *black-nebbit Johnie*,* black-beaked
The tongue o' the trump to them a';
An he get na Hell for his *haddin*, reward
The Deil gets nae justice ava:
And there will be Kempleton's *birkie*,† smart fellow
A boy no sae black at the *bane;* bone
But as to his fine Nabob fortune,
We'll e'en let the subject alane.

And there will be Wigton's new sheriff;‡
Dame Justice fu' brawly has sped,
She's gotten the heart of a Bushby,
But, Lord! what's become o' the head?
And there will be Cardoness, Esquire,§
Sae mighty in Cardoness' eyes;
A wight that will weather damnation,
The Devil the prey will despise.

And there will be Douglasses doughty,‖
New christening towns far and near;
Abjuring their democrat doings,
By kissin' the —— o' a Peer:
And there will be folk frae Saint Mary's,¶

---

* John Bushby, "honest man." We have already noted that he came to Dumfries from Cumberland, a penniless lad, and by tact rose to be the leading lawyer and banker in the burgh. In particular he was agent for many estates, and of these it was said, in Dumfries, that the proprietors became ever poorer as the "agent" grew richer.—J. H.

† William Bushby of Kempleton, a brother of John, who lost a fortune by Douglas Heron & Co.'s Bank, and retrieved it by going to the East Indies and trading there.

‡ Mr. Bushby Maitland, son of John, and newly appointed sheriff of Wigtonshire. He figures in the epistle of Esopus to Maria, page 205, Vol. IV.

§ David Maxwell of Cardoness, regarding whom, see page 26, Vol. VI.

‖ The Messrs. Douglas, brothers, of Carlinwark and Orchardton. They had just obtained a royal warrant to alter the name of Carlinwark to "Castle Douglas."

¶ The Earl of Selkirk's family, with whom the poet was in good terms; but in this instance they sided with the Tory interest.

A house o' great merit and note;
The *deil ane* but honors them highly— devil a one
The deil ane will gie them his vote!

And there will be Kenmure sae gen'rous,*
Whose honor is proof to the storm,
To save them from stark reprobation,
He lent them his name in the Firm,
And there will be lads o' the gospel,
Muirhead wha's as gude as he's true;†
And there will be Buittle's Apostle,‡
Wha's mair o' the black than the blue.

And there will be Logan M'Dowall,§
Sculdudd'ry an' he will be there,
And also the Wild Scot o' Galloway,
Sogering, gunpowder Blair.‖
But we winna mention Redcastle,¶
The body, e'en let him escape!
He'd venture the gallows for *siller*, money
An 'twere na the cost o' the *rape*. rope

But where is the Doggerbank hero,**
That made "Hogan Mogan" to skulk?
Poor Keith's gane to h–ll to be fuel,
The auld rotten wreck of a Hulk.
And where is our King's Lord Lieutenant,
Sae fam'd for his gratefu' return?
The *birkie* is gettin' his *Questions* fellow Catechism
To say in *Saint Stephen's the morn*. Parliament to-morrow

---

* Mr. Gordon of Kenmure, with whom Burns was also in good terms.

† Rev. Mr. Muirhead, of Urr, a proud man, and a high Tory.

‡ Rev. George Maxwell of Buittle, another high Tory. By saying that the priest of Buittle is "mair o' the black than the blue," Burns means that his alliance is rather "otherwhere" than with true-blue presbyterianism.—J. H.

§ Colonel M'Dowall of Logan: for *Sculduddery*, see Glossary.

‖ Mr. Blair of Dunskey. ¶ Walter Sloan Lawrie, of Redcastle.

** These four lines are from a fragment of the poet's MS. of this ballad, in the possession of Mr. Paterson, publisher, Edinburgh. A battle between the English and the Dutch was fought at the Doggerbank on August 5th, 1781.

But mark ye! there's trusty Kerroughtree,*
Whose honor was ever his law;
If the Virtues were pack'd in a parcel,
His worth might be sample for a';
And strang an' respectfu's his backing,
The maist o' the lairds wi' him stand;
Nae gipsy-like nominal barons,†
Wha's property's paper—not land.

And there, frae the *Niddisdale* borders, Nithsdale
The Maxwells will gather in droves,
Teugh Jockie,‡ staunch Geordie,§ an' Wellwood,‖
That *griens* for the fishes and loaves; groans (*longs*)
And there will be Heron, the Major,¶
Wha'll ne'er be forgot in the Greys;
Our flatt'ry we'll keep for some other,
HIM, only it's justice to praise.

And there will be maiden Kilkerran,**
And also Barskimming's gude Knight,††
And there will be roarin Birtwhistle,‡‡
Yet luckily roars i' the right.
And there'll be Stamp Office Johnie,§§
(Tak tent how ye purchase a dram!)
And there will be gay Cassencarry,
And there'll be gleg Colonel Tam.‖‖

And there'll be wealthy young Richard,¶¶
Dame Fortune should *hing* by the neck, hang

---

* Patrick Heron, of Kerroughtree, the Whig candidate.
† This refers to the fictitious electors, so common before the Reform Act of 1832, popularly called "paper," or "faggot voters."
‡ John Maxwell, Esq. of Terraughty.
§ George Maxwell of Carruchan. ‖ Mr. Wellwood Maxwell.
¶ Major Heron, brother of the Whig candidate.
** Sir Adam Fergusson of Kilkerran.
†† Sir William Miller of Barskimming, afterwards Lord Glenlee.
‡‡ Mr. Alex. Birtwhistle of Kirkcudbright.
§§ John Syme, Esq., Distributor of Stamps for Dumfries.
‖‖ Colonel Goldie, of Goldielea. ¶¶ Richard Oswald, Esq. of Auchincruive.

For prodigal, thriftless bestowing—
  His merit had won him respect.
And there will be rich brother Nabobs,*
  (Tho' Nabobs, yet men not the worst,)
And there will be Collieston's whiskers,†
  And Quintin‡—a lad o' the first.

Then hey! the chaste Interest o' Broughton,
  And hey! for the blessin's 'twill bring;
It may send Balmaghie to the Commons,
  In Sodom 'twould make him a king;
And hey! for the sanctified Murray,
  Our land wha wi' chapels has stor'd;
He founder'd his horse among harlots,
  But *gied* the auld *naig* to the Lord. gave horse

[The various copies of this ballad differ widely in arrangement of the verses. In the text, the first seven stanzas exhibit a laughable catalogue of the Tory party in the Election; while, with exception of the twelfth or closing verse, which gives the practical application, the remaining stanzas are devoted to the praises of Mr. Heron and his supporters.

After printing this ballad in his last edition, Chambers adds:—"Though Burns, we may well believe, had no view to his own interest in writing these diatribes, it appears there did result from them some little glimpse of a hope of promotion. Mr. Heron, hearing of them, and having perused one, wrote to Mr. Syme, with some references to the poet, as if it were not impossible that he might be able to advance his interests."

BALLAD THIRD.

JOHN BUSHBY'S LAMENTATION.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

Tune—"Babes in the Wood."

'TWAS in the seventeen hunder year
  O' grace, and ninety-five,

* Messrs. Hannay. † Mr. Copeland of Collieston.
‡ Mr. Quintin M'Adam, of Cragingillan.

That year I was the *wae'est* man woefulest
Of ony man alive.

In March the three-an'-twentieth morn,
The sun raise clear an' bright;
But oh! I was a waefu' man,
Ere *to-fa'* o' the night. fall

Yerl Galloway lang did rule this land, Earl
Wi' equal right and fame,
And thereto was his kinsmen join'd,
The Murray's noble name.[1]

Yerl Galloway's man o' men was I,
And chief o' Broughton's host;
So twa blind beggars, on a string,
The faithfu' *tyke* will trust. dog

But now Yerl Galloway's sceptre's broke,
And Broughton's wi' the slain,
And I my ancient craft may try,
Sin' honesty is gane.[2]

'Twas by the banks o' bonie Dee,
Beside Kirkcudbright's towers,
The Stewart* and the Murray there,
Did muster a' their powers.

Then Murray on the auld grey *yaud*, mare
Wi' winged spurs did ride,
That auld grey yaud a' Nidsdale rade,
He *staw* upon *Nidside*.† stole Nithside

---

* Stewart is the family name of the Earl of Galloway.—J. H.

† An allusion to the lady with whom Murray eloped—a member of the house of Johnston, whose well-known crest is a winged spur

An there had na been the Yerl himsel,
O there had been nae play;
But Garlies* was to London gane,
And *sae* the *kye* might stray. so

And there was Balmaghie, I ween,
In front rank he wad shine;
But Balmaghie had better been
Drinkin' Madeira wine.

And frae Glenkens cam to our aid
A chief o' doughty deed;
In case that worth should wanted be,
O' Kenmure we had need.

And by our banners march'd Muirhead,
And Buittle was na slack;
Whase haly priesthood nane could stain,
For wha could dye the black?

And there was grave squire Cardoness,
Look'd on till a' was done;
Sae in the tower o' Cardoness
A *howlet* sits at noon. owl

And there led I the Bushby clan,
My gamesome *billie*, Will, brother
And my son Maitland, wise as brave,
My footsteps follow'd still.

The Douglas and the Heron's name,
We set nought to their score;
The Douglas and the Heron's name,
Had felt our weight before.

---

* Lord Garlies, son of the Earl of Galloway, was member for the Stewartry.—J. H.

But Douglasses o' weight had we,
The pair o' lusty lairds,
For building cot-houses sae fam'd,
And christenin' *kail-yards.* cottage-gardens

And then Redcastle drew his sword,
That ne'er was stain'd wi' gore,
Save on a wand'rer lame and blind,
To drive him frae his door.

And last cam creepin Collieston,
Was mair in fear than wrath;
Ae knave was constant in his mind—
To keep that knave frae *scaith.* danger
* * * * *

[Mr. Lockhart remarks that "after the *Excise inquiry*, Burns took care, no doubt, to avoid similar scrapes; but he had no reluctance to meddle largely and zealously in the squabbles of county politics and contested elections; and thus by merely espousing the cause of the Whig candidates, he kept up very effectually the spleen which the Tories had originally conceived against him on tolerably legitimate grounds."

VAR.—[1] Fast knit in chaste and holy bands,
Wi' Broughton's noble name.

[2] Instead of this and the preceding four lines, [illegible] copies read thus:—

Yerl Galloway lang did rule the land,
Made me the judge o' strife;
But now Yerl Galloway's sceptre's broke,
And eke my hangman's knife.]

INSCRIPTION FOR AN ALTAR OF INDEPENDENCE,

AT KERROUGHTREE, THE SEAT OF MR. HERON.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

THOU of an independent mind,
With soul resolv'd, with soul resign'd;

Prepar'd Power's proudest frown to brave,
Who wilt not be, nor have a slave;
Virtue alone who dost revere,
Thy own reproach alone dost fear—
Approach this shrine, and worship here.

[Dr. Currie dates these lines, "Summer of 1795;" but we suspect he ought to have written "1794;" for on 21st June of that year the poet thus wrote to Mr. David M'Culloch of Ardwell:—"My dear sir, my long-projected journey through your country is at last fixed; and on Wednesday next, if you have nothing of importance to do, take a saunter down to Gateshouse about two or three o'clock, and I shall be happy to take a draught of M'Kune's best with you." (*See* page 137, *supra*.)

Chambers notices that the letter is "valuable as showing that at least a Whig country gentleman deemed Burns presentable at this time before good society." We conceive that as the poet never visited Kerroughtree after the summer of 1794, the inscription in the text is very likely to have been a composition of that year.]

THE CARDIN O'T, THE SPINNIN O'T.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1792.)

I COFT a stane o' haslock woo,*
To mak a *wab* to Johnie *o't;* web of it
For Johnie is my only *jo,* sweetheart
I loe him best of *onie* yet. any

Chorus—The cardin o't, the spinnin o't,
The warpin o't, the winnin o't;
When *ilka* ell cost me a groat, every
The tailor *staw* the lynin o't. stole

For tho' his locks be lyart grey,†
And tho' his brow be *beld* aboon; bald

* I bought a stone (17½ lbs.) of wool from the "hass" or throat of the sheep. "Haslock wool" is peculiarly fine and soft.—J. H.

† Grey mixed with black.

Yet I hae seen him on a day,
The pride of a' the *parishen.* parish
The cardin o't, &c.

[The original of this tender little snatch of song is in the British Museum.

The air "Salt fish and dumplings," to which the words are set in the *Museum*, is not original in character, and a perusal of the verses at once suggests that they were composed for the beautiful air "Johnie's grey breeks."]

THE COOPER O' CUDDY.

Tune—"Bab at the bowster."

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1796.)

Chorus—WE'LL hide the Cooper behint the door,
Behint the door, behint the door,
We'll hide the Cooper behint the door,
And cover him under a *mawn*, O. big-basket

The Cooper o' Cuddy came here awa,
He *ca'd* the *girrs* out o'er us a': drove hoops
An' our gudewife has gotten a *ca'*, push
That's anger'd the silly gudeman, O.
We'll hide the Cooper, &c.

He sought them out, he sought them in,
Wi' deil *hae* her! an' deil hae him! have
But the body he was sae *doited* and blin, stupid
He wist na where he was gaun, O.
We'll hide the Cooper, &c.

They cooper'd at e'en, they cooper'd at morn,
Till our gudeman has gotten the scorn;

On *ilka* brow she's planted a horn, either
And swears that there they sall stan', O.
We'll hide the Cooper, &c.

[Nothing more need be said regarding this song, than that it is undoubtedly by Burns, and his MS. of it is in the British Museum. Another coarse version occurs in "The Merry Muses," where the closing line of the chorus verse reads thus: "For fear o' the auld gudeman, O." The tune is well known in Scotland as one used at the breaking up of balls of the ruder sort, when every couple whirls into the closing dance in wild melee. Burns refers to this practice in his letter to James Smith, June 30th, 1787. "Our dancing was none of the French or English insipid formal movements: the ladies sang Scotch songs like angels, at intervals; then we flew at 'Bab at the Bowster,' &c., like midges sporting in the mottie sun, or craws prognosticating a storm in a harvest day."]

THE LASS THAT MADE THE BED TO ME.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1796.)

WHEN Januar' wind was blawin cauld,
As to the North I took my way,
The *mirksome* night did me enfauld, darksome
I knew na whare to lodge till day;
By my gude luck a maid I met,
Just in the middle o' my care,
And kindly she did me invite
To walk into a chamber fair.

I bow'd fu' low unto this maid,
And thank'd her for her courtesie;
I bow'd fu' low unto this maid,
An' bade her make a bed to me;
She made the bed baith large and wide,
Wi' twa white hands she spread it doun;
She put the cup to her rosy lips,
And drank—'Young man, now sleep ye soun'.'

Chorus—The bonie lass made the bed to me,
The *braw* lass made the bed to me, fine
I'll ne'er forget till the day I die,
The lass that made the bed to me.

She snatch'd the candle in her hand,
And frae my chamber went wi' speed;
But I call'd her quickly back again,
To lay some mair below my head:
A *cod* she laid below my head, pillow
And servèd me with due respect,
And, to salute her wi' a kiss,
I put my arms about her neck.
The bonie lass, &c.

"Haud aff your hands, young man!" she said,
"And dinna sae uncivil be;
Gif ye hae ony love for me,
O wrang na my virginitie."
Her hair was like the links o' *gowd*, gold
Her teeth were like the ivorie,
Her cheeks like lilies dipt in wine,
The lass that made the bed to me.
The bonie lass, &c.

Her bosom was the driven snaw,
Twa drifted heaps sae fair to see;
Her limbs the polish'd marble stane,
The lass that made the bed to me.
I kiss'd her o'er and o'er again,
And ay she wist na what to say:
I laid her 'tween me and the wa';
The lassie thocht na lang till day.
The bonie lass, &c.

Upon the morrow when we raise,
I thank'd her for her courtesie;

But ay she blush'd and ay she sigh'd,
And said, 'Alas, ye've ruin'd me.'
I clasp'd her waist, and kiss'd her *syne*, afterwards
While the tear stood twinkling in her e'e;
I said, my lassie, dinna cry,
For ye ay shall make the bed to me.
The bonie lass, &c.

She took her mither's holland sheets,
An made them a' in *sarks* to me; [illegible]
Blythe and merry may she be,
The lass that made the bed to me.
Chorus—The bonie lass made the bed to me,
The braw lass made the bed to me;
I'll ne'er forget till the day I die,
The lass that made the bed to me.

[The chorus and concluding four lines of the above ballad [illegible] pointed out by Burns in his note thereon, as forming part of the ancient song. He seems to refer to a common-place production, preserved by Tom D'Urfey, called "The Cumberland Lass," in which we thus read:—

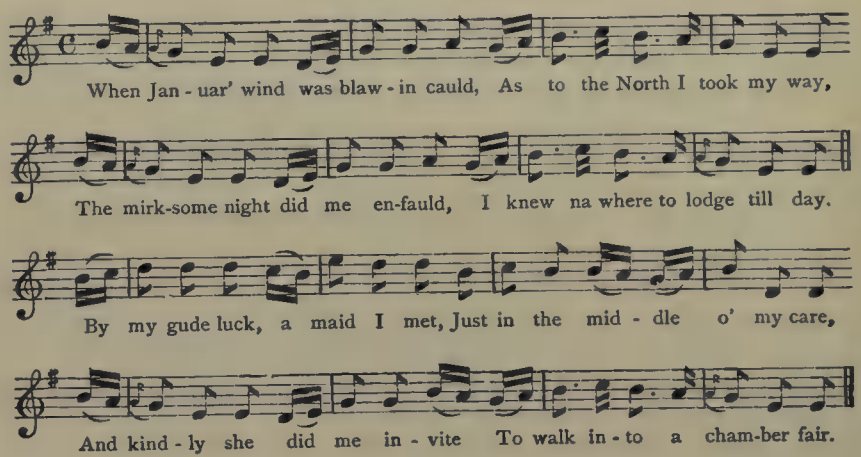
"She took her mother's winding sheet,
And cut it into sarks for me;
Blythe and merry may she be,
The lass that made the bed to me."

Burns tells us that the original ballad "was composed on [illegible] amour of Charles II., when skulking in the North about Aberdeen, in the time of the Usurpation. He formed *une petite affaire* with a daughter of the House of Port-Letham, who was" "the lass that made the bed" to him.

The luxurious ballad that forms the text is much too warmly colored to have found a place in Robert Chambers's edition of the works of Burns; but he inserted — from a source he did not acknowledge—a very innocent abridgement of it, as pure as smiling infancy. Cunningham had evidently been acquainted with that purified version, although he did not adopt it. It consists of seven stanzas of four lines each, the heroine being a humble maiden, who merely makes the bed and modestly retires; and next morning the wayfarer, who narrates the adventure, proposes marriage to her,

for no apparent reason but that he was smitten with her blushes, and melted by observing a pearly tear twinkle in her eye. The author of that "amended version" was Mr. William Stenhouse, who supplied illustrative notes to Johnson's *Musical Museum*, about the year 1820.

The melody attached to the ballad in the *Museum* is very indifferent; but Burns's words can be sung with fine effect to the following air. It will be observed that the chorus, which is just the second part of the tune repeated, does not come in till after the close of the second stanza.]



HAD I THE WYTE? SHE BADE ME.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1796.)

HAD I the *wyte*, had I the wyte, blame
Had I the wyte? She bade me,
She watch'd me by the *hie-gate* side, high-way
And up the *loan* she *shaw'd* me. lane showed
And when I wadna venture in,
A coward *loon* she ca'd me: fellow
Had Kirk an' State been in the *gate*, way
I'd lighted when she bade me.

Sae craftilie she took me *ben*, in
And bade me mak nae clatter;

'For our ramgunshoch,* *glum* gudeman sour
Is o'er ayont the water.'
Whae'er shall say I wanted grace,
When I did kiss and *dawte* her, fondle
Let him be planted in my place,
Syne say, I was the *fautor.* then in fault

Could I for shame, could I for shame,
Could I for shame refus'd her;
And wadna manhood been to blame,
Had I unkindly used her!
He *claw'd* her wi' the *ripplin-* scratched
kame, flax-dresser's comb
And *blae* and bluidy bruis'd her; blue
When sic a husband was frae hame,
What wife but wad excus'd her!

I *dighted* aye her e'en sae blue, wiped
An' *bann'd* the cruel *randy,* cursed bully
And *weel I wat,* her willin *mou* well I wot mouth
Was sweet as sugar-candie.
At *gloamin-shot,* it was I wot, twilight
I lighted—on the Monday;
But I cam thro' the *Tyseday's* dew, Tuesday's
To wanton Willie's brandy.

[Bordering on indelicacy as this performance does, it is purity itself beside the model that suggested it. Its melody is called "Come kiss wi' me, Come clap wi' me," and is also styled "The Bob o' Fettercairn," when used as a dancing-tune. The ancient air consists of one strain only; but in the *Museum* a second part is added which is mere fiddle-stick gymnastics.]

* Ramgunshoch means ill-natured and violent.—J. H.

DOES HAUGHTY GAUL INVASION THREAT?

Tune—"Push about the Jorum."

(CURRIE, 1800.)

DOES haughty Gaul invasion threat?
  Then let the *louns* beware, Sir; rascals
There's wooden walls upon our seas,
  And volunteers on shore, Sir:
The Nith shall run to Corsincon,*
  And Criffel† sink in Solway,
Ere we permit a foreign foe
  On British ground to rally!
We'll ne'er permit a foreign foe
  On British ground to rally!

O let us not, like snarling curs,
  In wrangling be divided,
Till, slap! come in an *unco loun*, foreign rascal
  And wi' a *rung* decide it! bludgeon
Be Britain still to Britain true,
  Amang oursels united;
For never but by British hands
  Maun British wrangs be righted! must
No! never but by British hands
  Shall British wrangs be righted!

The kettle o' the Kirk and State,
  Perhaps a *clout*‡ may fail in't, patch
But deil a foreign tinkler loun
  Shall ever ca' a nail in't.
Our fathers' blude the kettle bought,
  And wha wad dare to spoil it?

---

* Corsincon, a high hill at the source of the river Nith.

† Criffel, a mountain at the mouth of the same river, where it flows into the Solway.

‡ *i.e.*, It may require repair, as a tinkler "clouts a broken cauldron."

By Heav'ns! the sacrilegious dog
Shall fuel be to boil it!
By Heav'ns! the sacrilegious dog
Shall fuel be to boil it!

The wretch that would a tyrant own,
And the wretch, his true-born brother,
Who would set the mob aboon the throne,
May they be damn'd together!
Who will not sing 'God save the King,'
Shall hang as high 's the steeple;
But while we sing 'God save the King,'
We'll ne'er forget the People!
But while we sing 'God save the King,'
We'll ne'er forget the People!

[In the early part of 1795, two companies of volunteers were raised by Dumfries, as its quota for defending the fatherland, while the bulk of the regular army was engaged abroad. By War-Office intimation, dated 24th March, A. S. De Peyster, Esq., was appointed "Major Commandant" of the Dumfries Volunteers, and various gentlemen of the district were nominated as Captains and Lieutenants. Many of the liberal residents who had incurred the suspicion of the government were fain to enrol themselves in these corps, in order to show they were well affected towards their country. Syme, Maxwell, and others of the poet's friends, became volunteers. Burns followed suit, and the above noble effusion was soon thereafter composed. The ballad appeared in the *Dumfries Journal* of 5th May, as well as in the May number of the *Scots Magazine;* and printed copies of it, in form of a sheet-song, set to music by Mr. Stephen Clarke, were soon distributed to members of the corps to which the poet belonged. In thanking Johnson for a packet of the music sent to him, Burns thus wrote:—"Our friend Clarke has indeed done his part well: 'tis chaste and beautiful. I have not met with anything that has pleased me so much. You know I am no connoisseur; but that I am an amateur, will be allowed me."

A holograph MS. of this volunteer ballad, on excise paper, in good condition, is possessed by John Dick, Esq., Stirling.

In George Thomson's collection the ballad is set to the tune: "Get up and bar the door."

ADDRESS TO THE WOODLARK.

Tune—"Loch Erroch Side."

(GEO. THOMSON'S COLL., 1798.)

O STAY, sweet warbling woodlark, stay,
Nor quit me for the trembling spray,
A hapless lover courts thy lay,
  Thy soothing, fond complaining.
Again, again that tender part,
That I may catch thy melting art;
For surely that wad touch her heart
  Wha kills me wi' disdaining.

Say, was thy little mate unkind,
And heard thee as the careless wind?
Oh, nocht but love and sorrow join'd,
  Sic notes o' woe could wauken!
Thou tells o' never-ending care;
O' speechless grief, and dark despair:
For pity's sake, sweet bird, nae mair!
  Or my poor heart is broken.

[This truly fine lyric appears to have been forwarded to Thomson in May, 1795, a month during which he seems to have been more than usually prolific in song. Mr. Paterson, Publisher, Edinburgh, possesses a pencil manuscript in the poet's hand, containing his first thoughts while conceiving and executing this pathetic effusion. It reads as follows:—

SONG.—COMPOSED ON HEARING A BIRD SING WHILE MUSING ON CHLORIS.

Sing on, sweet songster o' the brier,
Nae stealthy traitor-foot is near;
O soothe a hapless Lover's ear,
  And dear as life I'll prize thee.

Again, again that tender part,
That I may learn thy melting art,
For surely that would touch the heart,
  O' her that still denies me.

Oh was thy mistress, too, unkind,
And heard thee as the careless wind?
For nocht but Love and Sorrow join'd
Sic notes of woe could wauken.

The closing four lines correspond with the text. The poet's first idea was to set the words to the tune "Whar'll bonie Ann lie;" but he changed his opinion, and directed it to be united to a much finer melody, "Loch Erroch Side," otherwise known as "The Lass o' Gowrie," to which it is invariably sung.]

SONG.—ON CHLORIS BEING ILL.

Tune—"Ay wauken, O."

(CURRIE, 1800.)

Chorus.—LONG, long the night,
Heavy comes the morrow,
While my soul's delight
Is on her bed of sorrow.

Can I cease to care,
Can I cease to languish,
While my darling Fair,
Is on the couch of anguish!
Long, long, &c.

Ev'ry hope is fled,
Ev'ry fear is terror;
Slumber ev'n I dread,
Ev'ry dream is horror.
Long, long, &c.

Hear me, Powers Divine!
Oh, in pity, hear me!
Take aught else of mine,
But my Chloris spare me!
Long, long, &c.

[This effusion was sent to Thomson in May 1795. Onward to the close of August of that year (but no farther), Jean Lorimer (or "Chloris") continued to be goddess of the poet's lyrical adoration. In the early part of August, Mr. Robert Cleghorn, Farmer, Saughton Mills, near Edinburgh, accompanied by two other Midlothian farmers, named respectively, John Allan and Robert Wight, paid Burns a visit at Dumfries, and were introduced to Chloris, as the following extract from a letter of Burns, addressed to the father of that young woman, will show :—"*Dumfries, Tuesday morning*.—My dear Sir, I called for you yesternight, both at your own house and at your favorite lady's—Mrs. Hislop of the Globe, but could not find you. I want you to dine with me to-day. I have two honest Midlothian Farmers with me, who have travelled three-score miles to renew old friendship with the poet, and I promise you a pleasant party, a plateful of Hotch-Potch, and a bottle of good, sound port. Mrs. Burns desired me yesternight to beg the favor of Jeany to come and partake with her, and she was so obliging as to promise that she would. If you can come, I shall take it very kind.—Yours, ROBERT BURNS. (Dinner at three.) To Mr. William Lorimer, senior, Farmer."

The above proves the intimacy that existed between the poet's family and that of the Lorimers, and indicates, moreover, that the tenderness evinced by Burns for Chloris was of no clandestine kind.]

HOW CRUEL ARE THE PARENTS.

Altered from an old English song.

Tune—"John Anderson, my jo."

(CURRIE, 1800.)

How cruel are the parents
  Who riches only prize,
And to the wealthy booby
  Poor Woman sacrifice!
Meanwhile, the hapless Daughter
  Has but a choice of strife;
To shun a tyrant Father's hate—
  Become a wretched Wife.

The ravening hawk pursuing,
  The trembling dove thus flies,

To shun impelling ruin,
  Awhile her pinions tries;
Till, of escape despairing,
  No shelter or retreat,
She trusts the ruthless Falconer,
  And drops beneath his feet.

[This is evidently a retouch of an old English original. The post-mark shows that it and the song following were forwarded to Thomson on 9th May 1795.]

YONDER POMP OF COSTLY FASHION.

Air—"Deil tak the wars."

(CURRIE, 1800.)

MARK yonder pomp of costly fashion
  Round the wealthy, titled bride:
But when compar'd with real passion,
  Poor is all that princely pride.
    Mark yonder, &c. (*four lines repeated.*)

What are the showy treasures,
  What are the noisy pleasures?
The gay, gaudy glare of vanity and art:
  The polish'd jewel's blaze
  May draw the wond'ring gaze;
  And courtly grandeur bright
  The fancy may delight,
But never, never can come near the heart.

But did you see my dearest Chloris,
  In simplicity's array;
Lovely as yonder sweet opening flower is,
  Shrinking from the gaze of day!
    But did you see, &c.

O then, the heart alarming,
And all resistless charming,
In love's delightful fetters she chains the willing soul!
Ambition would disown
The world's imperial crown,
Ev'n avarice would deny,
His worshipp'd deity,
And feel thro' every vein love's raptures roll.

["Well! this is not amiss," said the poet in sending the foregoing. "You see how I answer your orders. Your tailor could not be more punctual. I am just now in a high fit of poetising, provided that the strait-jacket of criticism don't cure me."]

'TWAS NA HER BONIE BLUE E'E.

Tune—"Laddie, lie near me."

(CURRIE, 1800.)

'TWAS na her bonie blue *e'e* was my ruin, eye
Fair tho' she be, that was ne'er my undoin';
'Twas the dear smile when nae body did mind us,
'Twas the bewitching, sweet, *stown* glance o' kindness, stolen
'Twas the bewitching, sweet, stown glance o' kindness.

Sair do I fear that to hope is denied me,
Sair do I fear that despair *maun* abide me, must
But tho' fell Fortune should fate us to sever,
Queen shall she be in my bosom for ever:
Queen shall she be in my bosom for ever.

Chloris, I'm thine wi' a passion sincerest,
And thou hast plighted me love o' the dearest!
And thou'rt the angel that never can alter,

Sooner the sun in his motion would falter:
Sooner the sun in his motion would falter.

[Burns seems to have intended the above as a kind of counterpart to his other sweet song—

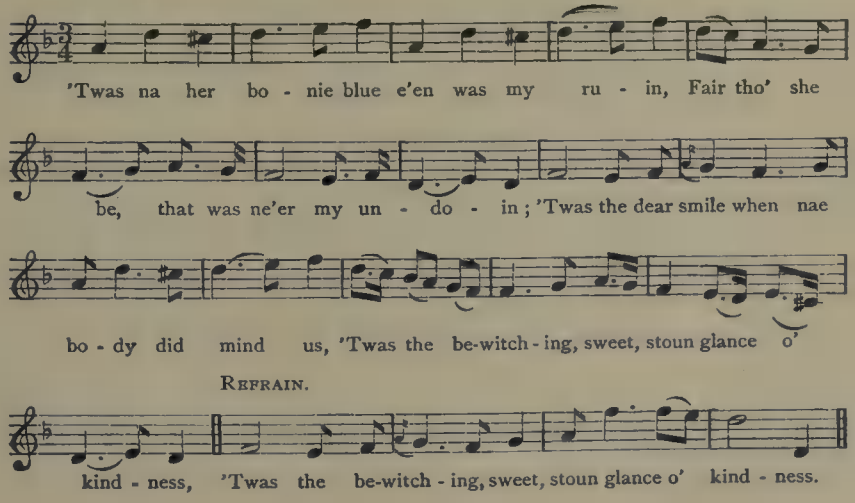
I gat my death frae twa sweet e'en,
Two laughin' e'en o' bonie blue,"

but it cannot be said the poet has been more than ordinarily successful here. The peculiar rhythm of the verse may have somewhat hampered the flow of his musings; and indeed he seems to have not entirely mastered the melody. He had long promised verses to this air; "*Laddie, lie near me,*" he once wrote to Thomson, "must lie by me for some time, I do not know the air, and until I am complete master of a tune in my own singing, such as it is, I can never compose for it."

The ancient words of the melody were recovered and published by Ritson in his "North Country Chorister:" Durham, 1802. They thus commence, but the reader would scarcely thank us for going beyond the introduction:—

"Down in yon valley, soft shaded by mountains,
Heard I a lad an' lass making acquaintance,
Making acquaintance and singing so clearly,
Lang hae I lain my lane—laddie lie near me."

The melody is very beautiful and not much known; therefore we annex it.]



THEIR GROVES O' SWEET MYRTLE.

Tune—"Humors of Glen."

(GEO. THOMSON'S COLL., 1799.)

THEIR groves o' sweet myrtle let Foreign Lands reckon,
Where bright-beaming summers exalt the perfume;
Far dearer to me yon lone glen o' green *breckan*, ferns
Wi' the burn stealing under the lang, yellow broom.
Far dearer to me are yon humble broom bowers,
Where the blue-bell and *gowan* lurk, lowly, unseen: daisy
For there, lightly tripping, among the wild flowers,
A-list'ning the linnet, aft wanders my Jean.

Tho' rich is the breeze in their gay, sunny vallies,
And cauld Caledonia's blast on the wave;
Their sweet-scented woodlands that skirt the proud palace,
What are they?—the haunt of the Tyrant and Slave.
The Slave's spicy forests, and gold-bubbling fountains,
The brave Caledonian views wi' disdain;
He wanders as free as the winds of his mountains,
Save Love's willing fetters—the chains o' his Jean.

[This patriotic effusion, communicated to Thomson in May 1795, is more often praised than sung. It cannot be that its melody has been ill-selected, as the air is admittedly one of the finest of the sentimental kind that Irish musical genius has produced. Currie remarks that "more particularly for Scotchmen estranged from their native soil, and spread over foreign lands, Burns seems to have written this song—a beautiful strain, which, it may be confidently predicted, will be sung with equal or superior interest on the banks of the Ganges or of the Mississippi, as on those of the Tay or the Tweed."

Byron must have had this song in mind when he wrote his song in praise of Caledonia, commencing:—

"Away ye gay landscapes, ye gardens of roses."]

The Banks of Doon.

"YE BANKS AND BRAES O' BONNIE DOON."

FORLORN, MY LOVE, NO COMFORT NEAR.

Air—"Let me in this ae night."

(CURRIE, 1800.)

FORLORN, my Love, no comfort near,
Far, far from thee, I wander here;
Far, far from thee, the fate severe,
At which I most repine, Love.

Chorus—O wert thou, Love, but near me!
But near, near, near me,
How kindly thou would'st cheer me,
And mingle sighs with mine, Love.

Around me scowls a wintry sky,
Blasting each bud of hope and joy;
And shelter, shade, nor home have I,
Save in these arms of thine, Love.
O wert thou, &c.

Cold, alter'd friendship's cruel part,
To poison Fortune's ruthless dart—
Let me not break thy faithful heart,
And say that fate is mine, Love.
O wert thou, &c.

But, dreary tho' the moments fleet,
O let me think we yet shall meet;
That only ray of solace sweet,
Can on thy Chloris shine, Love!
O wert thou, &c.

[This pathetic song, put into the lips of Chloris, was, like the six preceding ones, sent to Thomson in May 1795. In transmitting it the poet asked, "How do you like the foregoing? I have written it within this hour, so much for the *speed* of my Pegasus; but

what say you to his bottom?" It would appear that Thomson urged objections of some kind to verse third; for in his letter of August 3rd, 1795, Burns wrote, "Your objections are just as to that verse of my song. I hope the following alteration will please you:—

> Cold, alter'd friends, with cruel art,
> Poisoning fell Misfortune's dart;
> Let me not break thy faithful heart,
> And say that fate is mine, Love."]

FRAGMENT.—WHY, WHY TELL THE LOVER.

Tune—"Caledonian Hunt's delight."

(CURRIE, 1800.)

WHY, why tell the lover
Bliss he never must enjoy?
Why, why undeceive him,
And give all his hopes the lie?
O why, while fancy, raptur'd, slumbers,
"Chloris, Chloris" all the theme,
Why, why would'st thou, cruel—
Wake thy lover from his dream.

[This double stanza, transmitted, on 3rd July, 1795, is accompanied with the following remark:—"Such is the d——d peculiarity of rhythm of this air, that I find it impossible to make another stanza to suit it."

Thomson has inscribed this note on the margin:—"Instead of this poor song, I will take the one 'Ye banks and braes o' bonie Doon' for the air here mentioned.—G. T." In his reply to Burns, he said, "The fragment for the *Caledonian Hunt* is quite suited to the original measure of the air, and, as it plagues you so, the fragment must content it. I would rather, as I said before, have had Bacchanalian words, had it so pleased the poet; but, nevertheless, for what we have received, Lord make us truly thankful!"

This is another instance of Thomson's incapacity to read the proper sentiment of a melody; for the tune in question is universally felt to be pathetic in character.]

THE BRAW WOOER.

Tune—"The Lothian Lassie."

(GEO. THOMSON'S COLL., 1799.)

LAST May, a braw wooer cam doun the lang glen,
And sair wi' his love he did *deave* me; deafen
I said, there was naething I hated like men—
The deuce *gae wi'm*, to believe me, believe me; go with him
The deuce gae wi'm to believe me.

He spak o' the darts in my bonie black *e'en*, eyes
And vow'd for my love he was deein',
I said, he might die when he liket for Jean—
The Lord forgie me for leein', for leein';
The Lord forgie me for leein'!

A *weel-stocket mailen*, himsel for the laird, well-stocked farm
And marriage aff-hand, were his proffers;
I never *loot* on that I kenn'd it, or car'd; let
But thought I might hae *waur* offers, waur offers; worse
But thought I might hae waur offers.

But what wad ye think?—in a fortnight or less—
The deil tak his taste to gae near her!
He up the Gate-slack to my black cousin, Bess—
Guess ye how, the jad! I could bear her, could bear her;
Guess ye how, the jad! I could bear her.

But a' the *niest* week, as I fretted wi' care, next
I gaed to the tryste o' Dalgarnock;
And wha but my fine fickle wooer was there,
I glowr'd as I'd seen a *warlock*, a warlock, male witch
I glowr'd as I'd seen a warlock.

But *owre* my left shouther I gae him a *blink*, over glance
Lest neibours might say I was saucy;
My wooer he caper'd as he'd been in drink,
And vow'd I was his dear lassie, dear lassie,
And vow'd I was his dear lassie.

I *spier'd* for my cousin fu' *couthy* and sweet, asked kindly
Gin she had recover'd her hearin,
And how her new *shoon* fit her auld *schachl't* shoes
feet, mis-shapen
But heavens! how he fell a swearin, a swearin,
But heavens! how he fell a swearin.

He beggèd, for gudsake, I wad be his wife,
Or else I wad kill him wi' sorrow;
So e'en to preserve the poor body in life,
I think I maun wed him to-morrow, to-morrow;
I think I maun wed him to-morrow.

[This is a "pearl of great price" among the songs of Burns, and has been a popular favorite ever since it made its appearance. The melody selected for it is in every way calculated to give effect to the humor and *naïveté* of the words. Thomson objected to the localities "Gate-slack" and "Dalgarnock," and the poet explained that Gate-slack is a romantic pass among the Lowther Hills on the confines of Dumfriesshire, and that Dalgarnock is an equally romantic spot near the Nith, where still are to be seen a ruined church and burial-ground. He at length yielded to an alteration of the former, thus:—

"He up the lang loan to my black cousin, Bess."

Dr. Currie very properly observed on this point that "It is always a pity to throw out anything that gives locality to our poet's verses."

The following line in the last verse but one, has been changed by popular usage, since Burns's days, in order to give it additional point, thus:—

"And how 'my auld shoon' fitted her schachl't feet."

This makes it correspond with a common proverbial expression: when a lover deserts one mistress for another, the latter is twitted with wearing the *old shoes* of her predecessor.]

(Dalgarnock is an ancient parish, now merged in those of Closeburn and Morton. The ruins of the old church are within a mile of the village of Thornhill. In Burns's day, and later, the communion continued to be celebrated once a year in the churchyard, which was, on such occasions, a famous trysting-place for the youth of both sexes.—J. H.)

THIS IS NO MY AIN LASSIE.

Tune—"This is no my house."

(GEO. THOMSON'S COLL., 1799.)

Chorus.—THIS is no my ain lassie,
Fair tho' the lassie be;
Weel ken I my ain lassie,
Kind love is in her e'e.

I see a form, I see a face,
Ye weel may wi' the fairest place;
It wants, to me, the witching grace,
The kind love that's in her e'e.
This is no my ain, &c.

She's bonie, blooming, straight, and tall,
And lang has had my heart in thrall;
And ay it charms my very *saul*, soul
The kind love that's in her e'e.
This is no my ain, &c.

A thief sae *pawkie* is my Jean, sly
To steal a *blink*, by a' unseen; glance
But *gleg* as light are lovers' een, sharp
When kind love is in the e'e.
This is no my ain, &c.

It may escape the courtly sparks,
It may escape the learned clerks;

But well the watching lover marks
The kind love that's in her e'e.
This is no my ain, &c.

[This fine song was transmitted to Thomson, along with the two that immediately follow, on 3rd August, 1795; after which date, there was silence in the heaven of song for half a year. With exception of a note addressed to the father of "Chloris" early in August, and a short letter to Cleghorn, on the 21st of that month, there does not exist a scrap of the poet's writing in prose or verse that we can pronounce to have been penned by him, between 3rd August, and the close of December, 1795. And what is more to be regretted, the poet's history during that period is a complete blank; for Dr. Walker's narrative of his interview with Burns (erroneously set down by him as occurring in November 1795), undoubtedly appertains to 1794. Currie informs us that the poet was confined to the house with an accidental complaint from October 1795 to January 1796, which may be quite true, for about the close of 1795, Burns thus addressed Collector Mitchell in rhyme:—

"Ye've heard this while how I've been licket,*
And by fell Death was nearly nicket."

The song in the text is in the poet's best manner, and can never cease to be popular. His first draft of it, shows a singular variation thus:—

"*Chorus*—This is no my ain Body,
Fair tho' the Body be," &c.

But the song was rapidly composed, as we may assume from these words introducing it:—"The tune puzzles me a good deal, in fact I think, to change the old rhythm of the first or chorus part will have a good effect. I would have it something of the gallop of the following." For music, see "Thomson Correspondence," page 299, Vol. V.]

O BONIE WAS YON ROSY BRIER.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

O BONIE was yon rosy brier,
That blooms sae far frae haunt o' man;

* Explained at poem, page 116, *post*.

And bonie she, and ah, how dear!
It shaded frae the e'enin sun.

Yon rosebuds in the morning dew,
How pure, amang the leaves sae green;
But purer was the lover's vow
They witness'd in their shade yestreen.

All in its rude and prickly bower,
That crimson rose, how sweet and fair;
But love is far a sweeter flower,
Amid life's thorny path o' care.

The pathless wild, and *wimpling burn*, winding stream
Wi' Chloris in my arms, be mine;
And I the warld nor wish nor scorn,
Its joys and griefs alike resign.

[This is apparently the last song of Burns which was inspired by the charms of Jean Lorimer, and he never excelled it in purity of sentiment and lyric beauty. The bard seems to have intended these as Scottish verses to the air, "I wish my love was in a mire."]

SCOTTISH SONG INSCRIBED TO ALEXANDER CUNNINGHAM.

(Geo. Thomson's Coll., 1799.)

Now spring has clad the grove in green,
And strew'd the lea wi' flowers;
The furrow'd, waving corn is seen
Rejoice in fostering showers.
While *ilka* thing in nature join every
Their sorrows to forego,
O why thus all alone are mine
The weary steps o' woe!

The trout in yonder wimpling burn
  That glides a silver dart,
And, safe beneath the shady thorn,
  Defies the angler's art—
My life was *ance* that careless stream,
  That wanton trout was I;
But Love, wi' unrelenting beam,
  Has scorch'd my fountains dry.

That little floweret's peaceful lot,
  In yonder cliff that grows,
Which, save the linnet's flight, I wot,
  Nae ruder visit knows,
Was mine, till Love has o'er me past,
  And blighted a' my bloom;
And now, beneath the withering blast,
  My youth and joy consume.

The waken'd *lav'rock* warbling springs, sky-lark.
  And climbs the early sky,
Winnowing blythe his dewy wings
  In morning's rosy eye;
As little reck'd I sorrow's power,
  Until the flowery snare
O' witching Love, in luckless hour,
  Made me the thrall o' care.

O had my fate been Greenland snows,
  Or Afric's burning zone,
Wi' man and nature leagu'd my foes,
  So Peggy ne'er I'd known!
The wretch whose doom is 'hope nae mair'
  What tongue his woes can tell;
Within whase bosom, save Despair,
  Nae kinder spirits dwell.

[These five double stanzas, together with the preceding song and some verses inscribed to Chloris, form the contents of one sheet

transcribed by the poet for his "very much valued friend Mr. Cunningham" on 3rd August 1795, and signed "Coila." It is addressed at the end thus:—"To Mr. Cunningham—*Une bagatelle de l'amitie.*"

On 20th January thereafter, the poet, as if just wakened out of a trance, thus addressed Mrs. Riddell—"The Muses have not quite forsaken me. The following detached stanzas I intended to interweave in some disastrous tale of a Shepherd 'Despairing beside a clear stream.' *L'amour, toujours l'amour.*" He then transcribes the three central verses of the above song, without variation. The communication thus addressed to Mrs. Riddell now belongs to Thomas C. S. Corry, M.D., of Belfast, who purchased the MS. from that lady's representatives. In 1867 he caused it to be printed in *facsimile*, and published, with a Dedication to Mrs. Everett of Ayr, the daughter of Robert Burns, junior, son of the Bard.

O THAT'S THE LASSIE O' MY HEART.

Tune—"Morag."

(Geo. Thomson's Coll., 1799.)

O *wat* ye wha that lo'es me,
And has my heart a keeping?
O sweet is she that lo'es me,
As dews o' summer weeping,
In tears the rosebuds steeping!

Chorus.—O that's the lassie o' my heart,
My lassie ever dearer;
O she's the queen o' womankind,
And ne'er a ane to peer her.

If thou shalt meet a lassie,
In grace and beauty charming,
That e'en thy chosen lassie,
Erewhile thy breast sae warming,
Had ne'er sic powers alarming;
O that's the lassie, &c.

If thou hadst heard her talking,
(And thy attention's plighted,)
That *ilka* body talking, every
But her, by thee is slighted,
And thou art all-delighted;
O that's the lassie, &c.

If thou hast met this Fair One,
When frae her thou hast parted,
If every other Fair One
But her, thou hast deserted,
And thou art broken-hearted;
O that's the lassie o' my heart,
My lassie ever dearer;
O that's the queen o' womankind,
And ne'er a ane to peer her.

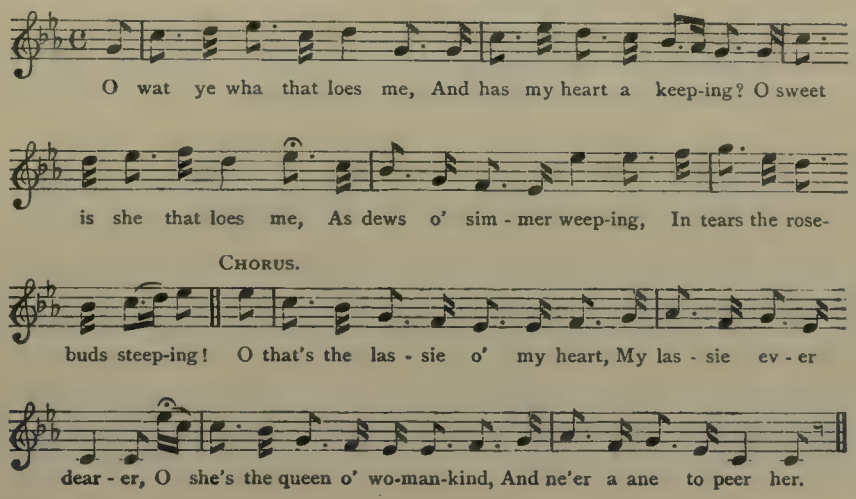
[Thomson, in October 1794, had asked Burns about the authorship of several songs in the second volume of *The Museum*, and on the 19th of that month, he thus replied:—"The *Young Highland Rover* (Morag) is also mine; but it is not worthy of the fine air." The poet appears to have kept in his view the desirability of making an effort to compose a superior song to this melody; and accordingly there is evidence that about the beginning of August 1795, he had given birth to the above admirable effusion. About that time, as we have stated at page 90, *supra*, his Edinburgh friend, Mr. Robert Cleghorn, accompanied by two Midlothian farmers, paid a visit to the poet in Dumfries, when this song, with other recent productions, was submitted to them. Burns entertained these visitors to a set dinner in his house, on which occasion, besides Dr. Maxwell, Dr. Mundell, and other gentlemen, Jean Lorimer, and her father, were present.

Mr. Cleghorn, on his return to Edinburgh, sent Burns a handsome copy of the Poems of Gawin Douglas, and at the same time requested to be favored with a copy of the song in the text. A sudden and severe illness, of which the poet became the victim immediately after the loss of his only daughter in autumn, prevented him from answering Cleghorn till January 1796, when he transcribed the song and wrote to his friend explaining his hapless condition.

The poet's holograph of the letter to Cleghorn with this song annexed, is now possessed by Mr. David Laing of the Signet Library, Edinburgh. The song nowhere appears in the Thomson

Correspondence; but as he published it before Currie, he must have been indebted to Cleghorn for the words.

Currie used the liberty of altering the opening line of the song to "O wha is she that loes me?" *Morag* (Gaelic for *Marion*) is perhaps the finest example of the music of the Highlands—not even excepting "Roy's Wife" and "Rothiemurchus"—and we therefore annex it; for the words lose half of their effect when separated from the melody.]



INSCRIPTION,

WRITTEN ON THE BLANK LEAF OF A COPY OF THE LAST EDITION OF MY POEMS, PRESENTED TO THE LADY WHOM, IN SO MANY FICTITIOUS REVERIES OF PASSION, BUT WITH THE MOST ARDENT SENTIMENTS OF REAL FRIENDSHIP, I HAVE SO OFTEN SUNG UNDER THE NAME OF—"CHLORIS."

'Tis Friendship's pledge, my young, fair Friend,
Nor thou the gift refuse,
Nor with unwilling ear attend
The moralising Muse.

Since thou, in all thy youth and charms,
  Must bid the world adieu,
(A world 'gainst Peace in constant arms)
  To join the Friendly Few.

Since, thy gay morn of life o'ercast,
  Chill came the tempest's low'r;
(And ne'er Misfortune's eastern blast
  Did nip a fairer flower.)

Since life's gay scenes must charm no more,
  Still much is left behind,
Still nobler wealth hast thou in store—
  The comforts of the mind!

Thine is the self-approving glow,
  Of conscious Honor's part;
And (dearest gift of Heaven below)
  Thine Friendship's truest heart.

The joys refin'd of Sense and Taste,
  With every Muse to rove:
And doubly were the Poet blest,
  These joys could he improve.

R. B.

[These verses to Chloris form the concluding portion of the sheet before referred to, which the poet addressed to his friend Mr. Cunningham on 3rd August 1795.

Poor "Chloris" henceforth disappears from the scene. Within twelve short months after this period, the heart of her minstrel ceased to beat and his lyre was for ever unstrung. Her father sank into poverty, and she became a cheerless wanderer. The last seven years of her life were passed in Edinburgh. A few friends turned up for her in that city; and there still exists an affecting note in her handwriting, returning thanks for some little kindnesses bestowed. The words are these:—"Burns's *Chloris* is infinitely oblidged to Mrs. ——— for her kind attention in sending the newspapers, and feels pleased and flattered by having so much said

and done in her behalf. Ruth was kindly and generously treated by Boaz; perhaps Burns's *Chloris* may enjoy a similar fate in the fields of men of talent and worth.—*March 2nd*, 1825."

She died in September 1831, at the age of fifty-six, in a humble lodging in Middleton's Entry, Potterrow (a locality which does not now exist), and her remains were interred in Newington burying-ground.]

FRAGMENT.—LEEZIE LINDSAY.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1796.)

WILL ye go to the Hielands, Leezie Lindsay,
Will ye go to the Hielands wi' me?
Will ye go to the Hielands, Leezie Lindsay,
My pride and my darling to be?

[Leaving the Bard for several months in the oblivious position in which his first Biographer and Editor placed him, we shall now endeavor to fill up the intervening blank with gleanings from the fifth and sixth volumes of Johnson's *Musical Museum*, for which work Burns continued to send little snatches of song till near the close of his life. Unfortunately the correspondence between the poet and Mr. Johnson has not been preserved in the connected form in which we have the Thomson Correspondence, and therefore the dates of our author's contributions to the *Museum* cannot be fixed with positive certainty. Such of these as have not already found a place in this and preceding volumes, we now present in their probable order of composition.

Of the fragment in the text with its corresponding music, Stenhouse says:—"This beautiful old air was communicated by Burns. The stanza to which it is adapted was written by him, and he intended to have added some more verses, as appears from Johnson's memorandum written on the original MS., 'Mr. Burns is to send words.'"

The singing of the late John Wilson, Scottish Vocalist, made this song very popular. The following are the additional words he adopted for extending it; we cannot say who manufactured them:—

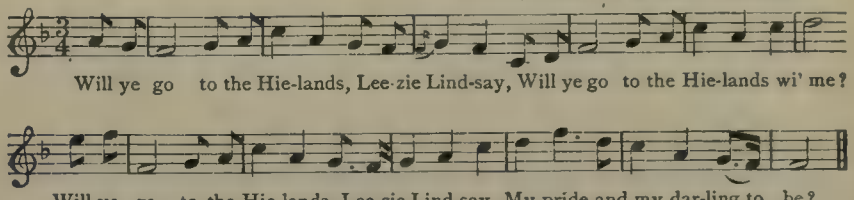
"To gang to the Hielands wi' you, Sir,
I dinna see how that may be;
For I ken na the gate ye are *gangin*, going
Nor ken I the lad I'm *gaun* wi'. going

O Leezie, lass, ye maun ken little,
If sae that ye dinna ken me;
My name is Lord Ronald Macdonald,
A chieftain o' high degree.

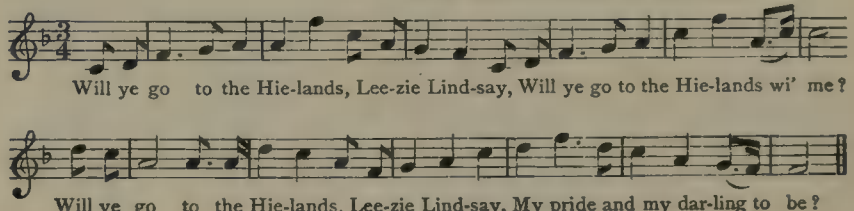
She has *kilted* her coats o' green satin, tucked up
She has kilted them up to the knee,
And she's aff wi' Lord Ronald Macdonald,
His pride and his darling to be."

The set of the melody in *Johnson*, we consider to be perfect; and yet another version of the air has crept into modern collections. We annex them both, that the reader may see how impossible it is for critical people to "let well alone."]

As in Johnson's Musical Museum.



As in Wood's Songs of Scotland, 1848.



FRAGMENT.—THE WREN'S NEST.

(Johnson's Museum, 1796.)

The Robin to the Wren's nest
Cam *keekin* in, cam keekin in; peeping
O *weel's me* on your auld *pow*, blessings on head
Wad ye be in, wad ye be in?
Thou's ne'er get leave to lie without,
And I within, and I within,
Sae lang's I hae an auld *clout* rag
To *rowe* ye in, to rowe ye in. wrap

[This is a little ditty with which Mrs. Burns used to divert her children by singing it over to them. The poet got the melody noted down for the *Museum*, where it is given (No. 406), with these words, which appear to be the introductory portion of a similar fragment published by David Herd, and re-produced in the *Museum* (No. 483) as follows :—

Air—"The Wren, or Lennox's love to Blantyre."

The Wren she lies in Care's bed, in Care's bed, in Care's bed,
The Wren she lies in Care's bed, in meikle dule and pyne, jo.
When in cam' Robin Redbreast, when in cam' Robin Redbreast,
When in cam' Robin Redbreast wi' sugar-saps and wine, jo.

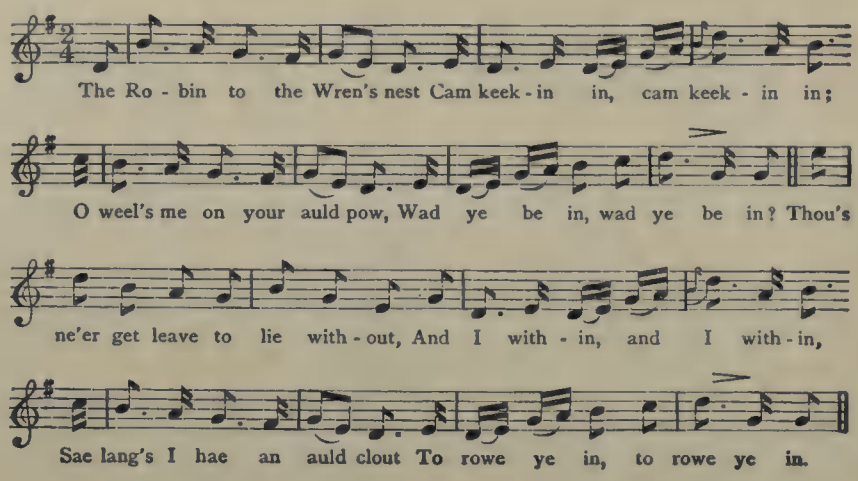
Now maiden, will ye taste o' this, taste o' this, taste o' this?
Now maiden, will ye taste o' this, it's sugar-saps and wine, jo.
Na, ne'er a drap, Robin, Robin, Robin,
Na, ne'er a drap, Robin, tho' it were ne'er sae fine, jo.

Then whare's the ring that I gied ye, that I gied ye, that I gied ye,
Say whare's the ring that I gied ye, ye little *cutty* queen, jo! saucy
I gied it till a soger, a soger, a soger,
I gied it till a soger, was ance a love o' mine, jo.

He promis'd to be back in Spring, to wed his little Jenny Wren,
But Spring and Simmer baith are gane, and here am I my lane, jo.
The Winter winds 'ill chill me thro', they'll chill me thro', chill me thro',
Ye'll think upon your broken vow, when I am dead and gane, jo.

Our main inducement for inserting this nursery ballad here, arises out of a little incident recorded by Chambers on the authority of Mrs. Thomson (the Jessie Lewars who attended Burns so kindly during his fatal illness). "One morning the poet offered, if she would play him any tune of which she was fond, and for which she desired new verses, to gratify her in that wish to the best of his ability. She accordingly played the air called 'The Wren's Nest,' and as soon as his ear got familiar with the tune, he sat down, and in a few minutes produced the admired song, 'O wert thou in the cauld blast.'"

The air played by Jessie Lewars was not "The Wren's Nest" (No. 406), but "The Wren," No. 483 of Johnson. The fifth volume of the *Museum*, where they both appear, was not then published, but the proof sheets may have been in the poet's possession. On the score of the melody, No. 406, Clarke has made the following note :—"This tune is only a bad set of *Johny's Gray Breeks*." We shall give, in its proper place, the air, No. 483, and meanwhile the reader will please to accept the following original melody for "The Wren's Nest."] (*See* page 129, *infra*.)



NEWS, LASSES, NEWS.

(A DUET.)

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1803.)

SHE.

THERE'S news, lasses, news,
Gude news I've to tell!
There's a boatfu' o' lads
Come to our town to sell.

Chorus—The *wean* wants a cradle, **infant**
And the cradle wants a *cod:* **pillow**
I'll no gang to my bed,
Until I get a *nod.* **invitation**

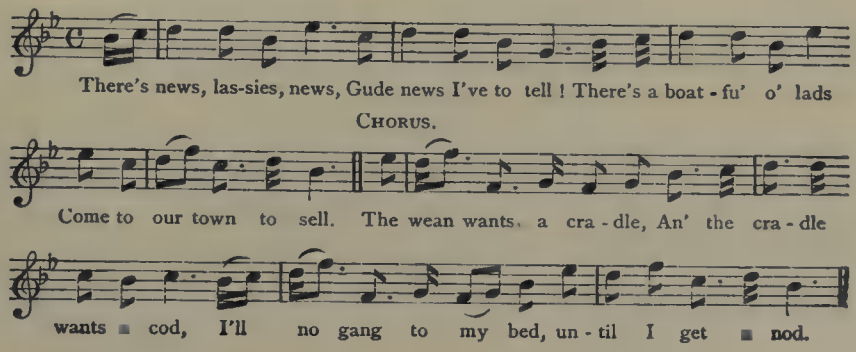
Father, quo' she, Mither, quo' she,
Do what you can,
I'll no gang to my bed,
Until I get a *man.*
The wean, &c.

HE.

I hae as gude a *craft rig* croft ridge
As made o' yird and stane; *
And *waly fa'* the *ley-crap*, woe betide lea-crop
For I *maun* till't again. must
The wean, &c.

[This curious ditty is barely intelligible, even to a Scotsman, unless he has been bred at the plough-tail. We suspect that the words were written merely to preserve the pretty little melody which our bard recovered, and we now annex it in the hope that some apt versifier may clothe it with more suitable words.]

(The obscurity is somewhat removed by recognizing that it is a girl who speaks in the first two stanzas, and a young man in the concluding stanza.—J. H.)



CROWDIE EVER MAIR.

(Johnson's Museum, 1803.)

O THAT I had ne'er been married,
I wad never had nae care,
Now I've gotten wife an' *weans*, children
An' they cry "Crowdie"† evermair.

---

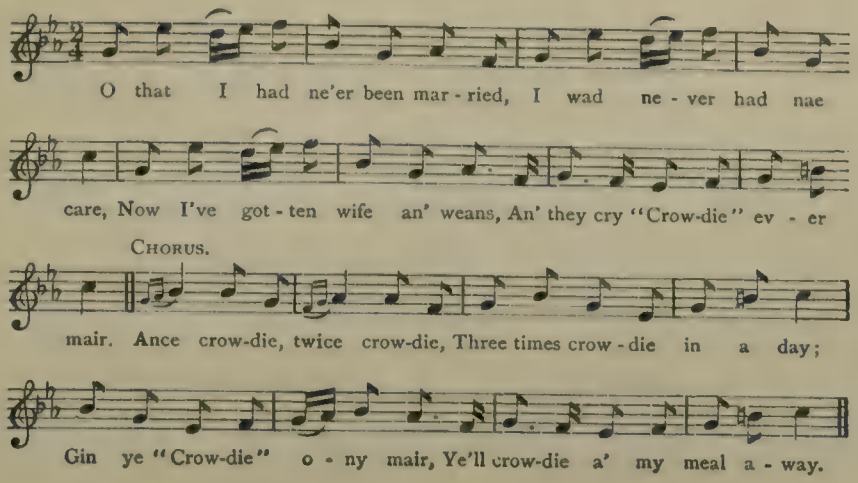
* I have as good a ridge of croft-land as is constituted by earth and stone.—J. H.

† Crowdie is properly oatmeal brose made with cold water, instead of with boiling; but the expression is used for any dish made of oatmeal, which, in one form or another, constituted, in former times, the staple article of diet for the common people of Scotland.—J. H.

Chorus—Ance crowdie, twice crowdie,
Three times crowdie in a day;
Gin ye "crowdie" *ony mair*, any more
Ye'll crowdie a' my meal away.

Waefu' Want and Hunger *fley* me, frighten
Glowrin by the *hallan en'*; staring end of the house
Sair I *fecht* them at the door, sore fight
But ay I'm *eerie* they come ben. apprehensive
Ance crowdie, &c.

[This pathetic effusion loses half its effect when separated from its music, which we give below. In a letter to Mrs. Dunlop, dated 15th December 1793, the poet, anticipating what might be his condition when laid on a death-bed, quotes the opening stanza and the chorus of this song, as part of an "old Scots ballad." "I see," he said, "a train of helpless little folks—me and my exertions all their stay; (and on what a brittle thread does the life of man hang!) If I am nipt off at the command of fate, even in all the vigor of manhood, as I am (such things happen every day), Gracious God! what would become of my little flock? . . . But I shall run distracted if I think any longer on the subject!" On his death-bed, these fears were all realized—"Alas, Clarke, I begin to fear the worst! As to my individual self, I am tranquil (I would despise myself if I were not); but Burns's poor widow, and half a dozen of dear little ones—helpless orphans—there I am weak as a woman's tear! Enough of this! 'Tis half my disease!" If we are to understand that the opening verse and chorus of the foregoing lyric are older than the days of Burns, there can be no question that the closing stanza is entirely his own. The language and imagery in these four lines are so grand and expressive, that they at once indicate the master hand of our Bard.]



MALLY'S MEEK, MALLY'S SWEET.

(Johnson's Museum, 1803.)

Chorus—Mally's meek, Mally's sweet,
Mally's modest and discreet;
Mally's rare, Mally's fair,
Mally's ev'ry way complete.

As I was walking up the street,
A *barefit* maid I chanc'd to meet; barefoot
But O the road was very hard
For that fair maiden's tender feet.
Mally's meek, &c.

It were mair meet that those fine feet
Were weel laced up in silken *shoon;* shoes
An' 'twere more fit that she should sit
Within yon chariot gilt *aboon.* above
Mally's meek, &c.

Her yellow hair, beyond compare,
Comes trinklin down her swan-like neck,

And her two eyes, like stars in skies,
Would keep a sinking ship frae wreck.
Mally's meek, &c.

[The above stanzas carry their own music along with them, therefore we shall not trouble the reader with any melody.]

JOCKEY'S TAEN THE PARTING KISS.

Air—"Bonie lass tak a man."

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1803.)

JOCKEY'S taen the parting kiss,
O'er the mountains he is gane,
And with him is a' my bliss,
Nought but griefs with me remain.
Spare my Love, ye winds that blaw,
Plashy sleets and beating rain!
Spare my Love, thou feath'ry snaw,
Drifting o'er the frozen plain!

When the shades of evening creep
O'er the day's fair, gladsome e'e,
Sound and safely may he sleep,
Sweetly blythe his waukening be.
He will think on her he loves,
Fondly he'll repeat her name;
For where'er he distant roves,
Jockey's heart is still the same.

[The poet is now languishing on a bed of sore sickness and distress. Hopelessly barred from participating in the delights of which he so lately sung:—

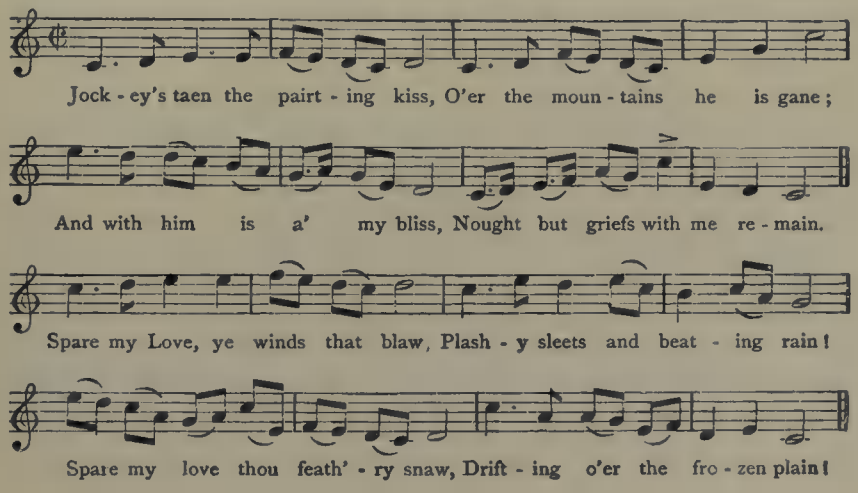
"The pathless wild and wimpling burn,
Wi' Chloris in my arms be mine,"

he is compelled to regard himself as having taken the parting kiss, and "gone over the mountains" away from the sight and the society of her whose smile gave alacrity and vigor to his musings. However, he has not parted with his "singing robes," and here he indites and puts into the lips of the absent fair one a song—not a glad one—but breathing of nature in every line:-

"Sound and safely may he sleep,
Sweetly blythe his waukening be.

He has told us that this beautiful "blessing" was his own mother's favorite "Good Night" at parting—"A sound sleep an' a blythe waukening;" so it was the very last expression her son was likely to forget.

The beauty of this lyric is greatly enhanced by its expressive air, which we here annex.]



VERSES TO COLLECTOR MITCHELL.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

FRIEND of the Poet, tried and leal,
Wha, wanting thee, might beg or steal;
Alake, alake, the *meikle* deil — big
Wi' a' his witches
Are at it, *skelpin* jig and reel, — dancing
In my poor *pouches!* — pockets

I modestly fu' fain wad hint it,
That *One-pound-one*, I sairly want it;
If wi' the *hizzie* down ye sent it, girl
It would be kind;
And while my heart wi' life-blood *dunted*, throbbed
I'd bear't in mind.

So may the Auld year gang out moanin
To see the New come laden, groanin,
Wi' double plenty o'er the *loanin*, path-way
To thee and thine:
Domestic peace and comforts crownin
The *hale* design. whole

POSTSCRIPT.

Ye've heard this while how I've been
licket, whipped
And by fell Death was nearly *nicket;* cut off
Grim loon! he got me by the *fecket*, under shirt
And sair me *sheuk;* shook
But by gude luck I *lap* a wicket, leapt
And turn'd a *neuk.* corner

But by that health, I've got a share o't,
And by that life, I'm promis'd mair o't,
My *hale and weel*, I'll tak a care o't, health and well-being
A *tentier* way; more guarded
Then farewell folly, hide and hair o't,
For ance and ay!

[Collector Mitchell, from whom the poet in the foregoing lines modestly borrows a guinea, was an intelligent person, and Burns was wont to submit his compositions to the test of his critical acumen. Chambers informs us that he was well-educated, with a design to follow the profession of a minister. These verses, from allusions contained in them, must have been penned at the close of 1795. How long the poet's illness had continued or what were

the characteristics of his trouble can only now be guessed at; for no particulars regarding these have been handed down for the information of posterity. His health was evidently now getting into a convalescent state; and from the close of January till the month of April 1796 he seems to have moved about with some hope of permanent physical improvement.]

THE DEAN OF FACULTY.

A NEW BALLAD.

Tune—"The Dragon of Wantley."

(CROMEK, 1808.)

DIRE was the hate at old Harlaw,
That Scot to Scot did carry;
And dire the discord Langside saw
For beauteous, hapless Mary:
But Scot to Scot ne'er met so hot,
Or were more in fury seen, Sir,
Then 'twixt Hal and Bob for the famous job,
Who should be the Faculty's Dean, Sir.

This Hal for genius, wit and lore,
Among the first was number'd;
But pious Bob, 'mid learning's store,
Commandment the tenth remember'd:
Yet simple Bob the victory got,
And wan his heart's desire,
Which shows that heaven can boil the pot,
Tho' the devil piss in the fire.

Squire Hal, besides, had in this case
Pretensions rather brassy;
For talents, to deserve a place,
Are qualifications saucy.

So their worships of the Faculty,
  Quite sick of merit's rudeness,
Chose one who should owe it all, d'ye see,
  To their gratis grace and goodness.

As once on Pisgah, purg'd was the sight
  Of a son of Circumcision,
So may be, on this Pisgah height,
  Bob's purblind mental vision—
Nay, Bobby's mouth may be open'd yet,
  Till for eloquence you hail him,
And swear that he has the angel met
  That met the ass of Balaam.

In your heretic sins may you live and die,
  Ye heretic Eight-and-Thirty!
But accept, ye sublime Majority,
  My congratulations hearty.
With your honors, as with a certain king,
  In your servants this is striking,
The more incapacity they bring,
  The more they're to your liking.

[The history of this production seems to be that, towards the close of 1795, in consequence of bad harvests and other causes, there was manifested much popular discontent, which gave uneasiness to the ministry. In the Adelphi Theatre of Edinburgh, a public meeting was convened to discuss politics and adopt means to alleviate the general distress, at which the Hon. Henry Erskine, Dean of the Faculty of Advocates, presided. Great offence was thereby given to the Conservative majority in the Parliament House, who resolved to set up an opposition candidate for the office of "Dean" at the ensuing election. The contest was decided on 12th January 1796, when Robert Dundas of Arniston, by a large majority, supplanted the Whig favorite.

Burns, besides having a real respect for Erskine, remembered an old grudge against Dundas (see page 138, Vol. II.), and vented his feelings in the above verses, which display the wit and vigor of his best days.

The original MS.—a copy once possessed by Allan Cunningham—is now in the British Museum. Cromek's copy wants the closing stanza, which was first published in 1842 by Peter Cunningham.]

EPISTLE TO COLONEL DE PEYSTER.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

My honor'd Colonel, deep I feel
Your interest in the Poet's weal;
Ah! now sma' heart hae I to *speel* climb
The steep Parnassus,
Surrounded thus by bolus pill,
And potion glasses.

O what a *canty* warld were it, happy
Would pain and care and sickness spare it;
And Fortune favor worth and merit
As they deserve;
And ay *rowth* o' roast-beef and claret, abundance
Syne, wha wad starve? then

Dame Life, tho' fiction out may trick her,
And in paste gems and frippery deck her;
O! flickering, feeble, and *unsicker* uncertain
I've found her still,
Ay wavering like the willow-wicker,
'Tween good and ill.

Then that curst carmagnole, auld Satan,
Watches like *baudrons* by a *ratton* the cat rat
Our sinfu' saul to get a *claut* on, clutch
Wi' felon ire;
Syne, whip! his tail ye'll ne'er cast *saut* on, salt
He's aff like fire.

Ah Nick! ah Nick! it is na fair,
First showing us the tempting ware,
Bright wines, and bonie lasses rare,
To put us daft;
Syne weave, unseen, thy spider snare — then
O' hell's damned *waft*. — weft

Poor Man, the flie, aft bizzes by,
And aft, as chance he comes thee nigh,
Thy damn'd auld elbow *yeuks* wi' joy — itches
And hellish pleasure;
Already in thy fancy's eye,
Thy *sicker* treasure. — certain

Soon, *heels o'er gowdie*, in he *gangs*, — heels over head goes
And, like a sheep-head on a *tangs*, — tongs
Thy girning laugh enjoys his pangs,
And murdering wrestle,
As, dangling in the wind, he hangs
A gibbet's tassle.

But lest you think I am uncivil
To plague you with this draunting drivel,
Abjuring a' intentions evil,
I *quat* my pen, — quit
The Lord preserve us frae the devil!
Amen! Amen!

[Colonel Arentz Schulyer de Peyster, Major Commandant of the Dumfriesshire corps of Volunteers, although seventy years of age at this date, survived Burns upwards of a quarter century. He died and was buried in Dumfries in November 1822, his age being ninety-six. He was of French extraction, if not a native of France, but served as a British Officer in Upper Canada during the American war. On retiring from service, he settled down in Dumfries, the native place of his wife, who was a daughter of Provost Blair; the wife of Burns's friend, John M'Murdo of Drumlanrig, was another of Provost Blair's daughters.]

A LASS WI' A TOCHER.

Tune—"Ballinamona Ora."

(GEO. THOMSON'S COLL., 1799.)

AWA wi' your witchcraft o' Beauty's alarms,
The slender bit Beauty you grasp in your arms,
O, gie me the lass that has acres o' charms,
O, gie me the lass wi' the weel-stockit farms.

Chorus—Then hey, for a lass wi' a *tocher*, dowry
Then hey, for a lass wi' a tocher;
Then hey, for a lass wi' a tocher;
Then nice yellow guineas for me.

Your Beauty's a flower, in the morning that blows,
And withers the faster, the faster it grows:
But the rapturous charm o' the bonie green *knowes*, knolls
Ilk spring they're new deckit wi' bonie white *yowes*. Each ewes
Then hey, for a lass, &c.

And e'en when this Beauty your bosom hath blest,
The brightest o' Beauty may cloy when possess'd;
But the sweet, yellow darlings wi' Geordie impress'd,*
The langer ye hae them, the mair they're carest.
Then hey, for a lass, &c.

[After a pause of six months, the Thomson Correspondence was resumed for a brief period in February 1796. Mr. Thomson wrote on the 5th of that month intimating his intention to publish an octavo edition of his collection, and requesting Burns to furnish words for a few Irish airs mentioned. The song in the text was the first result, and in the letter that inclosed it the poet announced

* Sovereigns bearing the impress of King George's head.—J. H.

his purpose to withdraw the name "Chloris" from some of his songs. "I meant it," he says, "as the fictitious name of a certain lady, but, on second thoughts, it is a high incongruity to have a Greek appellation to a Scots pastoral ballad. What you once mentioned to me of 'flaxen locks' is just; they cannot enter into an elegant description of female beauty."

The following inferior stanza is seen in the MS. of this song, as verse second, but fortunately deleted :—

"I grant ye, your Dearies are bonie and braw,
She's *genty* and *strappin*, and stately witha'; genteel tall
But see yon strappin oaks at the head o' the *shaw*, wood
Wi' the whack of an ax, how stately they'll fa'.
Then hey, for ■ lass, &c."]

HERON ELECTION BAL AD, NO. IV.

THE TROGGER.

Tune—"Buy Broom Besoms."

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

WHA will buy my troggin,* fine election ware,
Broken trade o' Broughton, a' in high repair?

Chorus—Buy braw troggin frae the banks o' Dee;
Wha wants troggin let him come to me.

There's a noble Earl's fame and high renown,†
For an auld sang—it's thought the gudes were *stown*— stolen
Buy braw troggin, &c.

Here's the worth o' Broughton‡ in a needle's e'e;
Here's a reputation *tint* by Balmaghie.§ lost
Buy braw troggin, &c.

■ See note at end.
† The Earl of Galloway.
‖ Mr. Murray of Broughton.
§ Gordon of Balmaghie.

Here's its stuff and lining, Cardoness's head,*
Fine for a soger, a' the *wale* o' lead. choice
Buy braw troggin, &c.

Here's a little *wadset*, Buittle's† scrap o' truth, pledge
Pawn'd in a gin-shop, quenching holy drouth.
Buy braw troggin, &c.

Here's an honest conscience might a prince adorn;
Frae the downs o' Tinwald,‡ so was never worn.
Buy braw troggin, &c.

Here's armorial hearings frae the manse o' Urr;
The crest, a sour crab-apple, rotten at the core.§
Buy braw troggin, &c.

Here is Satan's picture, like a bizzard *gled*, falcon
Pouncing poor Redcastle,‖ sprawlin like a *taed*. toad
Buy braw troggin, &c.

Here's the font where Douglas¶ stane and mortar names;
Lately used at Caily christening Murray's crimes.
Buy braw troggin, &c.

Here's the worth and wisdom Collieston** can boast;
By a thievish midge they had been nearly lost.
Buy braw troggin, &c.

Here is Murray's fragments o' the ten commands;
Gifted by black Jock†† to get them aff his hands.
Buy braw troggin, &c.

---

* Maxwell of Cardoness. † Rev. Geo. Maxwell of Buittle.
‡ John Bushby of Tinwald.
§ Rev. James Muirhead of Urr, who talked of himself as "The Muirhead," and displayed family heraldry.
‖ Walter Sloan Lawrie of Redcastle.
¶ Douglas of Carlinwark, who changed the name of that town to *Castle Douglas*
** Copland of Collieston. †† John Bushby.

Saw ye e'er sic troggin? if to buy ye're slack,
Hornie's* turnin chapman—he'll buy a' the pack.
Buy braw troggin, &c.

[The reader may feel that he has already seen quite enough of those Ballads on such long defunct matter, possessing at the best merely local interest; and we dare say Burns also thought he had heard the end of the business when he sent forth his third Heron ballad, given at page 69, *supra*. Mr. Heron gained the Election, but he had scarcely entered on parliamentary duties when a dissolution occurred. This happened in May 1796, and a new contest for the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright was the consequence. Mr. Heron was opposed on this occasion by the Hon. Montgomery Stewart, a younger son of the Earl of Galloway; and Burns, confined as he was to a sick-bed, could not remain unconcerned. He accordingly produced the ballad in the text. "Troggers" are a set of vagrant traffickers who travel with a donkey and cart laden with all kinds of wares which they may gather in their journies, and which they hawk for money or barter. The "trogger" in the ballad has the reputations of the Galloway party for his stock in trade. Burns did not live to know the result of the second election. Heron again triumphed, but, alas for the instability of mundane matters! the result was challenged, and the election having been subjected to the judgment of a committee, Mr. Heron was unseated. This adverse conclusion seems to have broken his heart; for he died on his way down to Scotland.]

COMPLIMENTARY VERSICLES TO JESSIE LEWARS.

THE TOAST.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

FILL me with the rosy wine,
Call a toast, a toast divine;
Give the Poet's darling flame,
Lovely Jessie be her name;
Then thou mayest freely boast,
Thou hast given a peerless toast.

* The Devil, from his horned head.

[From about the middle of April, Burns was rarely able to leave his room; and during a considerable portion of each day he had to keep his bed. One day he took up a crystal goblet, and inscribed "The Toast" upon it with his diamond, and presented it to his kind attendant, Miss Lewars.]

THE MENAGERIE.

TALK not to me of savages,
From Afric's burning sun;
No savage e'er could rend my heart,
As, Jessie, thou hast done:
But Jessie's lovely hand in mine,
A mutual faith to plight,
Not even to view the heavenly choir,
Would be so blest a sight.

[Mr. Brown, the surgeon, on one of his visits to the poet, brought an advertising sheet describing the contents of a menagerie of wild beasts then being exhibited in Dumfries. Burns seeing Miss Lewars occupied in perusing the bill, asked for a sight of it, and he immediately wrote the above lines on the back of it, with a red pencil.]

JESSIE'S ILLNESS.

SAY, sages, what's the charm on earth,
Can turn Death's dart aside!
It is not purity and worth,
Else Jessie had not died.

ON HER RECOVERY.

BUT rarely seen since Nature's birth,
The natives of the sky;
Yet still one seraph's left on earth,
For Jessie did not die.

[Jessie Lewars, a sister of John Lewars, the poet's fellow-exciseman, was an amiable young woman, who acted the part of a ministering angel in the household of Burns during this period of distress. Chambers observes that "it is curious to find him, even in his

present melancholy circumstances, imagining himself as the lover of his wife's kind-hearted young friend; as if the position of the mistress were the most exalted in which his fancy could place any woman he admired, or towards whom he desired to express gratitude."]

O LAY THY LOOF IN MINE, LASS.

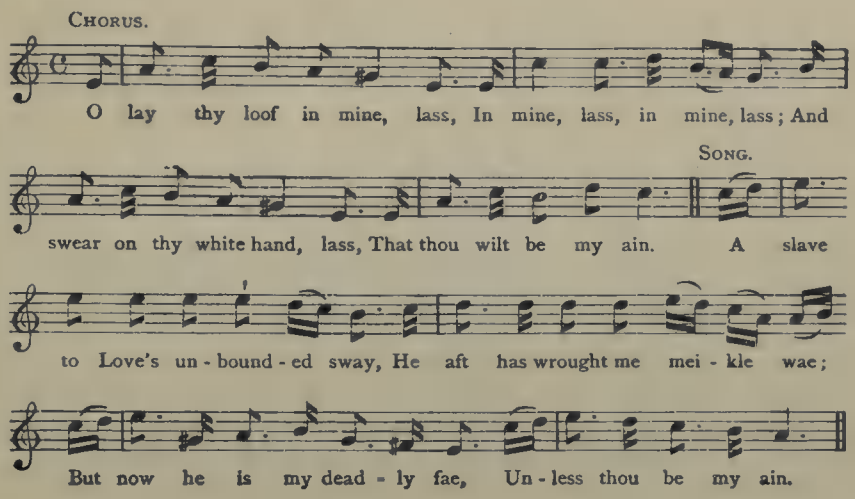
(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1803.)

Chorus—O lay thy *loof* in mine, lass, palm
In mine, lass, in mine, lass;
And swear on thy white hand, lass,
That thou wilt be my ain.

A SLAVE to Love's unbounded sway,
He aft has wrought me *meikle wae;* much woe
But now he is my deadly *fae,* foe
Unless thou be my ain.
O lay thy loof, &c.

There's mony a lass has broke my rest,
That for a *blink* I hae lo'ed best; short time
But thou art queen within my breast,
For ever to remain.
O lay thy loof, &c.

[The above little song is so very similar in character to the two popular lyrics addressed to Jessie Lewars which immediately follow, that we are disposed to regard it as another of those effusions elicited by the poet's regard for her at this period. The tune, which is understood to be very old, is called "The Cordwainer's March."]



A HEALTH TO ANE I LOE DEAR.

(Geo. Thomson's Coll., 1799.)

Chorus—Here's a health to ane I loe dear,
Here's a health to ane I loe dear;
Thou art sweet as the smile when fond lovers meet,
And soft as their parting tear—Jessy.

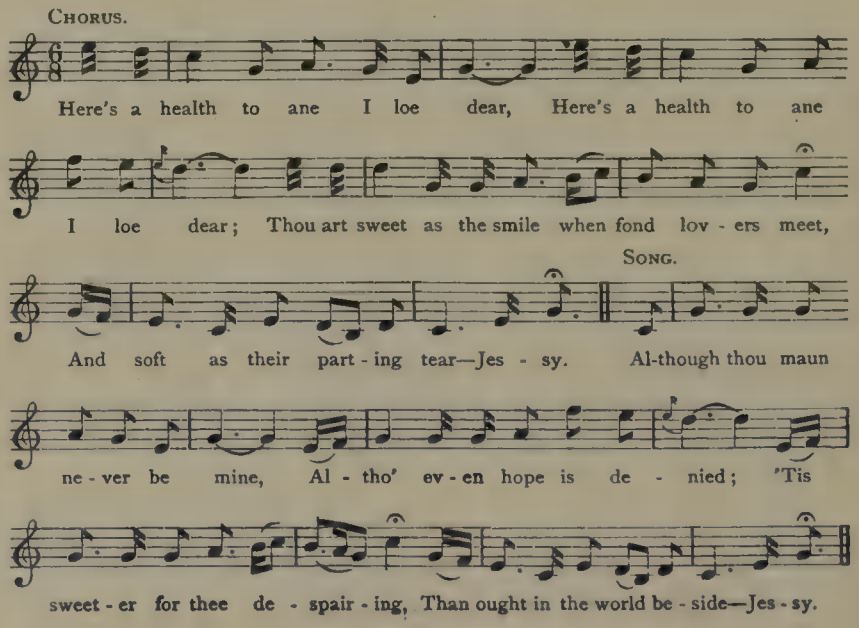
Altho' thou *maun* never be mine, must
Altho' even hope is denied;
'Tis sweeter for thee despairing,
Than ought in the world beside—Jessy.
Here's a health, &c.

I mourn thro' the gay, gaudy day,
As hopeless I muse on thy charms;
But welcome the dream o' sweet slumber,
For then I am lockt in thine arms—Jessy.
Here's a health, &c.

I guess by the dear angel smile,
I guess by the love-rolling e'e;

But why urge the tender confession,
'Gainst Fortune's fell, cruel decree, Jessy?
Here's a health, &c.

[This beautiful lyric, which Currie believed to be "the last finished offspring" of Burns's Muse, was forwarded to Thomson about 17th May 1796. The last four lines (not included in the MS. sent to Thomson) were found among the Bard's papers after his death. Seldom has Burns excelled this love-song in elegance of expression, poetic sentiment, and perfect lyrical execution. Jessie Lewars, the subject of the verses, was married about three years after this period, to Mr. James Thomson, writer in Dumfries —3d June 1799 being the date of the marriage. A family of five sons and two daughters was the result of the union. She survived her husband, and spent the years of her widowhood at Maxwelltown near Dumfries. It will be remembered that, at the great Burns-Festival held near the Ayr Monument on 6th August 1844, Jessie Lewars and her husband sat next to the relatives of the Poet, on the right hand of the chairman. In her death she was not far separated from them, for her tomb-stone is fixed in the wall, close to the Mausoleum of the Bard. We there read that her husband died on 5th May 1849, aged 75, and that she died on 26th May 1855, aged 77.]



O WERT THOU IN THE CAULD BLAST.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

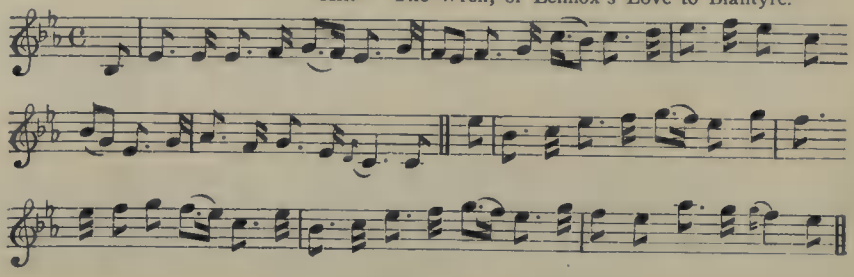
O WERT thou in the cauld blast,
On yonder lea, on yonder lea,
My plaidie to the angry *airt*, point
I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee;
Or did Misfortune's bitter storms
Around thee blaw, around thee blaw,
Thy *bield* should be my bosom, shelter
To share it a', to share it a.'

O were I in the wildest waste,
Sae black and bare, sae black and bare,
The desert were a Paradise,
If thou wert there, if thou wert there;
Or were I Monarch o' the globe,
Wi' thee to reign, wi' thee to reign,
The brightest jewel in my crown
Wad be my Queen, wad be my Queen.

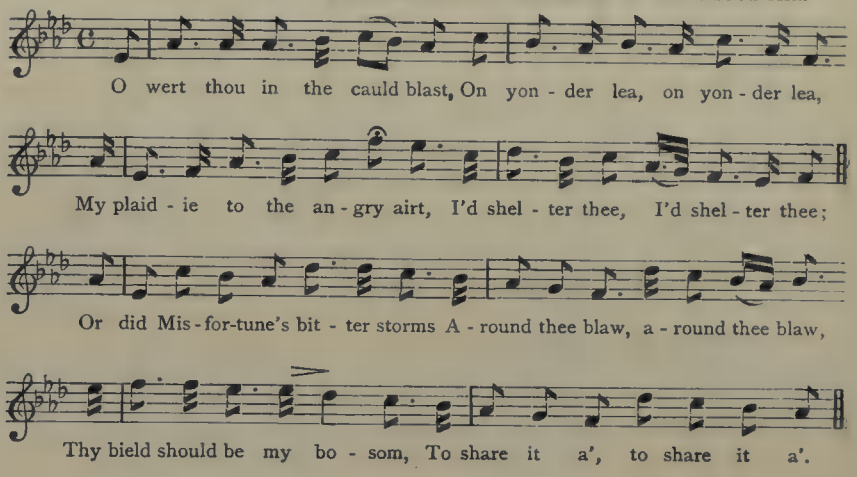
[At page 109, *supra*, we promised to give, in connexion with this interesting effusion, the very notes which hymned in the ear of Burns from the harpsichord of Jessie Lewars while he composed it. In the *Museum*, that melody (No. 483) consists of two strains, the second of which is nearly a repetition of the first, an octave higher. That unfits it for vocal execution, and therefore, while we annex the full air, verbatim from Johnson, without the words, we give at the same time a new construction of the melody, adapted to Burns's words, embracing all the characteristics of the old air.

Mendelssohn composed a melody for the words in the text, which he arranged as a Duet. It is described by Chambers as "an air of great pathos, 'such as the meeting soul may pierce,' in which the great German composer seems to have divined the peculiar feeling, beyond all common love, which Burns breathed into the song." Notwithstanding, we regard the following as better adapted to the simple effusion.] (For Mendelssohn's music, see p. 194, *infra*.)

AIR—"The Wren, or Lennox's Love to Blantyre."



ORIGINAL MELODY SUGGESTED BY THE ABOVE AIR.



INSCRIPTION TO MISS JESSY LEWARS,

ON A COPY OF THE SCOTS MUSICAL MUSEUM, IN FOUR VOLUMES, PRESENTED TO HER BY BURNS.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

THINE be the volumes, Jessy fair,
And with them take the Poet's prayer,
That Fate may, in her fairest page,
With ev'ry kindliest, best presage
Of future bliss, enrol thy name:
With native worth and spotless fame,
And wakeful caution, still aware
Of ill—but chief, Man's felon snare;

All blameless joys on earth we find,
And all the treasures of the mind—
These be thy guardian and reward;
So prays thy faithful friend, the Bard.

DUMFRIES, *June 26th*, 1796.

[The first volume of this presentation copy of the *Museum* (so far as published in the lifetime of Burns) was exhibited, bearing the above inscription on its fly-leaf, at Dumfries, on the occasion of the Burns Centenary in 1859. In the bard's published correspondence is a letter from him to Johnson, the original of which bears to have been delivered by post on 17th June 1796. It concludes thus:—"My wife has a very particular friend, a young lady who sings well, to whom she wishes to present the *Scots Musical Museum*. If you have a spare copy, will you be so obliging as to send it by the very first *Fly*, as I am anxious to have it soon."

Cromek, who first published the letter in 1808, says in a footnote: "In this humble and delicate manner did poor Burns ask for a copy of a Work to which he had gratuitously contributed not less than 184 original, altered, and collected songs!" Allan Cunningham, who personally knew nothing of the transaction, thus rashly ventured to remark in his latest edition:—"Will it be believed that this humble request was not complied with!" This calumny was repeated in that biographer's note to a later letter of the bard, thus:—"Few of the last requests of the poet were effectual: Clarke, it is believed, did not send the second pound-note he wrote for: Johnson did not send the copy of the *Museum* which he requested, and the Commissioners of Excise refused the continuance of his full salary."

We gladly aid in wiping away the injustice thus done to Johnson, who, although poor, was known to be a generous man, and greatly esteemed by Burns. In the Edinburgh Subscription list, which was opened after the poet's death for the benefit of his family, we find the name of "James Johnson, engraver," set down for Four pounds; while George Thomson subscribes no more than Two guineas.]

FAIREST MAID ON DEVON BANKS.

Tune—"Rothiemurchie."

(CURRIE, 1800.)

Chorus—Fairest maid on Devon banks,
Crystal Devon, winding Devon,
Wilt thou lay that frown aside,
And smile as thou wert wont to do?

FULL well thou know'st I love thee dear,
Couldst thou to malice lend an ear!
O did not Love exclaim: 'Forbear,
Nor use a faithful lover so.'
Fairest maid, &c.

Then come, thou fairest of the fair,
Those wonted smiles, O let me share;
And by thy beauteous self I swear,
No love but thine my heart shall know.
Fairest maid, &c.

[This last strain of the great master of lyric eloquence is dated from "Brow, on the Solway Frith, 12th July 1796," and he died on 21st of same month. There were two fair maids on Devon banks, whose charms he had celebrated in 1787, namely Charlotte Hamilton and Peggy Chalmers. We cannot bring ourselves to conceive that he ever had much love for Charlotte, although he praised her beauty highly; whereas, it is manifest from some observations which dropped from Clarinda, that he did dream of a common-sense, practical passion for Peggy Chalmers, afterwards Mrs. Lewis Hay. That lady herself, when living in widowhood, at Edinburgh, informed Thomas Campbell, the poet, that Burns had made her a serious proposal of marriage. He must at one period have been impressed with the notion that he had declined in her favor through the slander of tale-bearers, and this ruling thought is strongly expressed in the above song:—

"Could'st thou to malice lend an ear!
O did not love exclaim: 'Forbear,
Nor use a faithful lover so.'"

Burns left Dumfries for Brow on 4th July, and returned home on the 18th. On the 21st, early in the day, all was over.]

CORRESPONDENCE.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO PROSE OF THE SIXTH VOLUME.

THE period covered herein is from the Spring of 1794 till his death in July 1796. His residence during this period was Dumfries. All this time he was in failing health, but shows no evidence of failing intellectual power; indeed, on his death-bed, he wrote songs worthy of immortality.—G. G.

As recorded at the end of the Poetry portion of Vol. IV., page 210, on the 21st of April, 1794, Burns's warm-hearted friend, the Laird of Glenriddell and Friars Carse, breathed his last. As already observed, no opportunity of effecting a reconcilement between them had presented itself, yet the poet, generously forgetting everything but the kindness and worth of the deceased, composed a prompt poetical tribute to his memory, which appeared in the *Dumfries Times*, of the same date with the public announcement of his death. (*See* the Sonnet on that occasion, as above reference.)

Burns, feeling some uneasiness about the ultimate fate of a manuscript volume of his poems which had been deposited by him in the library of his deceased friend, addressed the following letter concerning it, to a sister of Mrs. Riddell at Friars Carse.* The companion volume of his Letters, intended for the same library (now the prose portion of the Glenriddell MSS. in the Library of the Liverpool Athenæum), had evidently remained undelivered when the intimacy betwixt the two friends was suddenly interrupted.

* Mr. Walter Riddell seems to have been a fast-living squire. He had just parted with his wife's property of Woodley Park, and at his brother's death inherited Friars Carse, which was sold by him or his creditors in the following June.

(1) TO MISS ————.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

DUMFRIES, *May* 1794.

MADAM,—Nothing short of a kind of absolute necessity could have made me trouble you with this letter. Except my ardent and just esteem for your sense, taste, and worth, every sentiment arising in my breast, as I put pen to paper to you, is painful. The scenes I have past with the friend of my soul, and his amiable connections! The wrench at my heart to think that he is gone, for ever gone from me, never more to meet in the wanderings of a weary world! and the cutting reflection of all, that I had most unfortunately, though most undeservedly, lost the confidence of that soul of worth, ere it took its flight!

These, Madam, are sensations of no ordinary anguish.—However, you also may be offended with some *imputed* improprieties of mine; sensibility you know I possess, and sincerity none will deny me.

To oppose those prejudices which have been raised against me is not the business of this letter. Indeed it is a warfare I know not how to wage. The powers of positive Vice I can in some degree calculate, and against direct Malevolence I can be on my guard; but who can estimate the fatuity of giddy Caprice, or ward off the unthinking mischief of precipitate Folly?

I have a favor to request of you, Madam; and of your sister Mrs. Robt. Riddell, through your means. You know that at the wish of my late friend, I made a collection of all my trifles in verse which I had ever written. They are many of them local, some of them puerile and silly, and all of them unfit for the public eye. *As I have some little fame at stake, a

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* Burns always believed that his works would *live*.—G. G.

~~with~~ him a worthy Friend, both of yours & mine. — Many of my letters to you, you were pleased to think well of, but writing to you was always the ready business of my heart, & I scarcely ever scrolled a line. — Perhaps a perusal of my Manuscript would please you — You shall have it —

Findlater can wait no longer — Let me recommend him to your civilities —

Adieu!

Robt Burns

Facsimile of the Original MS. in the possession of Mr. Ferdinand J. Dreer, Philadelphia, Pa.

My Dear Friend,

Allow me to introduce M.r Findlater to you, our Supervisor of Excise, & a gentleman of great information & the first worth. — I lie & have long lain under great obligations to him, & by way of recompense (what I assure you I think no small one) I wish to make him acquainted with a man of worth equal to his own, & of respectability, I am happy to hear, great & daily increasing — He is just going, so I have not a moment to tell you of my Poetic business —— Of that soon. ——

I have been making a Collection of all the blotted scrolls of any letters I have written & which I had scrolled, which I intended to have given to poor Glenriddell — Alas! he is gone.

fame that I trust may live, when the hate of those who "watch for my halting," and the contumelious sneer of those whom accident has made my superiors, will, with themselves, be gone to the regions of oblivion; I am uneasy now for the fate of those manuscripts.—Will Mrs. Riddell have the goodness to destroy them, or return them to me? As a pledge of friendship they were bestowed; and that circumstance indeed was all their merit. Most unhappily for me, that merit they no longer possess, and I hope that Mrs. Riddell's goodness, which I well know, and ever will revere, will not refuse this favor to a man whom she once held in some degree of estimation.*

With the sincerest esteem I have the honor to be, Madam, &c. R. B.

TO MR. PETER HILL, BOOKSELLER, EDINBURGH.†

(*Here first published.*)

[*May* 1794.]

My dear Friend,—Allow me to introduce Mr. Findlater to you, our Supervisor of Excise; and a gentleman of great information and the first worth. I lie and have long been under great obligations to him, and by way of recompense (and what I assure you I think no small one) I wish to make him acquainted with a man of worth equal to his own, and of respectability, I am happy to hear, great and daily increasing. He is just going; so I have not a moment to tell you of my poetic business. Of that soon.

I have been making a collection of all the blotted

* The reader has seen from the article on the Glenriddell MSS., Vol. V., page 413, that the volume was returned to him as desired.

† The original of this letter (of which we publish a fac-simile) is in the collection of Mr. Ferdinand J. Dreer, of Spruce street, Philadelphia, to whose kindness we are indebted for its publication.—G. G.

scrolls of any letters I have written, and which I had scrolled, which I intended to have given to poor Glenriddell. Alas! he is gone, and in him a worthy Friend, both of yours and mine.—Many of my letters to you, you were pleased to think well of, but writing to you was always the ready business of my heart, and I scarcely ever scrolled* a line.—Perhaps a perusal of my manuscript would please you. You shall have it.

Findlater can wait no longer. Let me recommend him to your civilities.

Adieu! ROBT. BURNS.

[This letter to Peter Hill, read in connection with the preceding to Miss ———, proves, that of the Glenriddell MSS., now in the Athenæum Library, Liverpool, only the Poems had been delivered to Mr. Riddell before his demise. Whether the MSS. of Letters, referred to in Hill's letter, were ever forwarded to Hill, we cannot even venture to guess. There are evidently several letters to Hill which have not yet been published. We think that there is more likelihood of interesting Burns letters addressed to Hill turning up in the future, than to any one else; indeed, we feel that the whole correspondence nowhere indicates incompleteness, except in regard to his correspondence with Mr. Hill, and Mrs. Dunlop, and probably two or three to Clarinda.—G. G.]

(1) TO DAVID M'CULLOCH, ESQ., ARDWELL, GATEHOUSE.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)†

MY DEAR SIR,—My long-projected journey through your country is at last fixed; and on Wednesday

* Meaning he never recopied a line, but sent Hill's letters as written—first draft.

† This letter is collated from the poet's holograph in the British Museum. The reader will understand that it is addressed to the young gentleman who related the affecting anecdote of Burns, on the occasion of a County Ball in Dumfries, so effectively told by Lockhart. That incident is set down by Chambers as having occurred in connexion with the King's birthday festivities in the early part of this very month, June 1794.

next, if you have nothing of more importance than take a saunter down to Gatehouse, about two or three o'clock, I shall be happy to take a draught of M'Kune's best with you. Collector Syme will be at Glen's about that time, and will meet us about dish-of-tea-hour. Syme goes also to Kerrochtree; and let me remind you of your kind promise to accompany me there. I will need all the friends I can muster, for I am indeed ill at ease whenever I approach your Honorables and Right Honorables. Yours sincerely, ROBT. BURNS.

DUMFRIES, 21*st June* 1794.

(39) TO MRS. DUNLOP OF DUNLOP.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

CASTLE DOUGLAS, 25*th June* 1794.

HERE in a solitary inn, in a solitary village, am I set by myself, to amuse my brooding fancy as I may. —Solitary confinement, you know, is Howard's favorite idea of reclaiming sinners; so let me consider by what fatality it happens, that I have so long been exceeding sinful as to neglect the correspondence of the most valued friend I have on earth. To tell you that I have been in poor health, will not be excuse enough, though it is true. I am afraid I am about to suffer for the follies of my youth. My medical friends threaten me with a flying gout; but I trust they are mistaken.

I am just going to trouble your critical patience with the first sketch of a stanza I have been framing as I paced along the road. The subject is LIBERTY: You know, my honored friend, how dear the theme is to me. I design it as an irregular ode for General Washington's birth-day. After having mentioned the

degeneracy of other kingdoms, I come to Scotland thus:

Thee, Caledonia, thy wild heaths among,
Thee, famed for martial deed and sacred song,
To thee I turn with swimming eyes;
Where is that soul of freedom fled?
Immingled with the mighty dead,
Beneath the hallowed turf where Wallace lies!
Hear it not, Wallace, in thy bed of death,
Ye babbling winds, in silence sweep,
Disturb ye not the hero's sleep,
Nor give the coward secret breath.
Is this the power in freedom's war,
That wont to bid the battle rage?

With the additions of—

Behold that eye which shot immortal hate,
Braved usurpation's boldest daring;
That arm which, nerved with thundering fate,
Crushed the despot's proudest bearing:
One quenched in darkness, like the sinking [star],
And one the palsied arm of tottering, powerless age.

You will probably have another scrawl from me in a stage or two. R. B.

[This letter to Mrs. Dunlop is lacking in heartiness, and is manifestly a politic performance. Compare it with the jovial, unreserved epistle to CLARINDA of the same date, from the same place (see page 140, Vol. V.), and the reader will understand the distinction we make of the effort of duty seen in every line to Mrs. Dunlop and the spontaneous burst of hearty and unrestrained abandon with which he opens his heart to Clarinda.

Mrs. Dunlop's letter is important in its reference to, and the meagre extract which he gives her from his poem of LIBERTY (see page 3, *supra*). His reason for quoting the altered fragment from his great Ode, was because the fragment given, flatters her "hobby," Wallace, from whom, we have already seen, she claimed direct descent.

Mrs. Dunlop, a clear-headed, shrewd, but kindly lady, we have no doubt began to note the flagging interest which Burns now manifested in his correspondence with her, and when we find, in the course of two years afterwards, that he complains sorrowfully of her neglect,—and some of his biographers condemn her for her

coldness,—we must in justice say that we are not surprised that she ceased to correspond with one so lukewarm as Burns shows himself in the present letter.

We do, however, blame her for allowing Dr. Currie, as editor of Burns's works, to falsify dates, which she must have known was a wrong to the public. We believe that she acquiesced in the falsification—repenting the course she had adopted, and preferring to have it understood that no coldness on her part had ever occurred.—G. G.]

([10]) TO MR. JAMES JOHNSON, ENGRAVER.

AT JOHNSON & CO., MUSIC SHOP, EDINBURGH.

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)*

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I thank you for your kind present of poor Riddell's Book.† Depend upon it that your fifth volume shall not be forgotten. In the meantime, I have gotten you two new subscribers, Patrick Heron, Esquire of Kerrochtree, and Major Heron of Kerrochtree. Please put up two sets of your four volumes, and direct them as above, and leave them at Mr. Heron's, George Square. Please do it on receipt of this, as there will be a carrier from Kerrochtree in Edinburgh this week.

I have just been getting three or four songs for your book. Pray, will you let me know how many, and what are the songs Urbani has borrowed from your *Museum?* Yours, R. B.

June 29th 1794.

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* From the poet's holograph in the British Museum.

† A posthumous work by Mr. Robert Riddell of Glenriddell—a "collection of Scots, Galwegian, and Border Tunes."

(1) TO CAPTAIN JOHN HAMILTON, DUMFRIES.

(Dr. Hately Waddell's Ed., 1869.)*

[*July* 1794.]

Sir,—It is even so—you are the only person in Dumfries, or in the world, to whom I have *run in debt;* and I took the freedom with you, because I believed, and do still believe, that I may do it with more impunity as to my feelings than any other person almost that I ever met with. I will settle with you soon; and I assure you, Sir, it is with infinite pain that I have transgressed on your goodness. The unlucky fact for me is, that in the beginning of these disastrous times, in a moment of imprudence, I lent my name to a friend who has since been unfortunate; and of course, I had a sum to pay which my very limited income and large family could ill afford.† God forbid, Sir, that anything should ever distress you as much as writing this card has done me.

With sincerest gratitude and most respectful esteem, I have the honor to be, Sir, your very humble servt.,

Robt. Burns.

(16) TO MR. PETER HILL, BOOKSELLER, EDINBURGH.

(Chambers, 1852.)‡

[Dumfries, *Oct.* 1794.]

My dear Hill,—By a carrier of yesterday, Henry Osborn by name, I sent you a skippered Salmon,

* This rather painful letter, the original of which was in the possession of the late John Adam, Esq., Greenock, appears to be a reply to a craving demand made by the poet's former landlord for some arrears of rent which had been contracted. We shall hear more of this matter early in 1795.

† The reference here apparently is to "Crombie's bill," in the letter to Mr. Gracie the banker, page 278, Vol. IV.

‡ From the *Knickerbocker Magazine*, New York, *Sep.* 1848.

which I trust you will duly receive, and which I also trust will give you many a toothful of satisfaction. If you have the confidence to say that there is anything of the kind in all your great city superior to this in true kipper relish and flavor, I will be revenged by—not sending you another next season. In return, the first party of friends that dine with you (provided that your fellow-travellers, and my trusty and well-beloved veterans in intimacy, Messrs. Ramsay and Cameron,* be of the party), about that time in the afternoon when a relish or devil, becomes grateful, give them two or three slices of the kipper, and drink a bumper to your friends in Dumfries. Moreover, by last Saturday's Fly, I sent you a hare, which I hope came, and carriage free, safe to your hospitable mansion and social table. So much for business.

How do you like the following pastoral which I wrote the other day, for a tune that I dare say you well know?

CA' THE YOWES TO THE KNOWES.

(*See* page 21, *supra.*)

And how do you like the following?

ON SEEING MRS. KEMBLE IN YARICO.

Kemble, thou cur'st my unbelief
  Of Moses and his rod;
At Yarico's sweet notes of grief,
  The rock with tears had flow'd.

Or this?

ON W—— R——, ESQUIRE.

So vile was poor Wat.—such a miscreant slave,
That the worms even damn'd him when laid in his grave;
"In his skull there is famine!" a starv'd reptile cries;
"And his heart it is a poison!" another replies.

* Mr. Ramsay was the printer of the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, and Mr. Cameron was a wholesale stationer and paper manufacturer, brother to the Rev. Wm. Cameron of Kirknewton. These two gentlemen, along with Mr. Hill had been recently visiting Burns at Dumfries.

My best good wishes to Mrs. Hill, and believe me to be, ever yours,* R. BURNS.

VISIT OF PROFESSOR J. WALKER TO BURNS IN NOV. 1794.

THIS gentleman, afterwards Professor of Humanity in the University of Glasgow, had, as the reader is aware, been introduced to the poet by Dr. Blacklock in Edinburgh early in the year 1787. They again met at Blair during the poet's Highland tour, Walker being then resident there in the capacity of tutor to some of the younger branches of the Duke of Athole's family. The entry then made by Burns in his Journal is thus favorable to Walker:—"Confirmed in my good opinion of my friend Walker." In the year 1811 Mr. Walker produced a

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* This being the last letter addressed by the poet to Mr. Peter Hill, excepting a short note in January 1796, we shall take this opportunity to introduce a brief biographical notice of this cherished correspondent of Burns. He was born in November 1754, and thus was older than our poet by upwards of four years. His father was Mr. James Hill, collector of shore dues in Dysart, whence Peter removed with his mother to Leith after his father's death, about 1770. After some service in the nursery and seed shop of Eagle & Henderson, High Street, he was engaged as principal clerk to Mr. Creech, the bookseller, about 1784; and in four years thereafter he commenced the bookselling trade on his own account, taking with him Archibald Constable as his first apprentice. From his shop in Parliament Square he removed to the Cross, south side of the street, in 1790.

His wife, who is frequently mentioned by Burns in the correspondence, was Eliza Lindsay, daughter of Sir John Lindsay, second son of Sir Alexander Lindsay, Bart. of Evilick, in Perthshire. A sister of her father was Mrs. Murray of Henderland, mother of the late Lord Murray; and another sister was the wife of Allan Ramsay the painter. Peter Hill's marriage took place in 1780, and a large family was the result, of whom Peter, the eldest son, followed his father's business. The readers of "Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk" will be familiar with the author's complimentary notice of young Hill's business as well as social habits. Margaret, the eldest daughter, was married to Frank Bridges in 1805, and several members of her family still survive. Two of Peter Hill's daughters are yet alive, namely, ELIZA, now the widow of Provost Normand of Dysart; and LINDSAY HILL, born in 1803, and now the widow of the late George Wilson, Esq. of Dalmarnock, who died in 1861. To his son and namesake we are indebted for access to the manuscripts of Burns's letters addressed to his grandfather, Mr. Hill, and much of the information in this note.

In reference to Peter Hill's public life in Edinburgh, we find he was elected "Captain of Orange Colours" in October 1794. In 1805 he was appointed City Treasurer; and from 1809 to 1813, during the provostship of Mr. Creech, he acted as Treasurer of George Heriot's Hospital. In 1814 he was appointed chief collector of burgal taxes, which post he occupied till near the close of his life. At the age of 83 he died at his house in Randolph Crescent, on 10th February 1837.—(*W. S. Douglas* 1878.)

Biography of Burns, from which we have already made several quotations, and towards its close he introduces an interesting narrative of a visit paid by him to the poet in November 1794 (not 1795, as he has erroneously set down). We shall quote the account entire in the narrator's own words.

"Circumstances having led me to Scotland after an absence of (seven) years, during which my intercourse with Burns had been almost suspended, I felt strongly prompted to visit him. For this purpose I went to Dumfries, and called upon him early in the forenoon. I found him in a small house of one storey.* He was sitting in a window-seat reading, with the doors open, and the family arrangements going on in his presence, and altogether without that appearance of snugness and seclusion which a student requires. After conversing with him for some time, he proposed a walk, and promised to conduct me through some of his favorite haunts. We accordingly quitted the town, and wandered a considerable way up the beautiful banks of the Nith. Here he gave me an account of his latest productions, and repeated some satirical ballads which he had composed to favor one of the candidates at the last borough election.† He repeated also his fragment of an "Ode to Liberty," with marked and peculiar energy, and showed a disposition, which, however, was easily repressed, to throw out political remarks of the same nature as those for which he had been reprehended. On finishing our walk, he passed some time with me at the Inn, and I left him early in the evening, to make another visit at some distance from Dumfries.

"On the second morning after, I returned with a friend who was acquainted with the poet, and we found him ready to pass a part of the day with us at the Inn. On this occasion I did not think him quite so interesting as he had appeared at his outset. His conversation was too elaborate; and his expression weakened by a frequent endeavor to give it artificial strength. He had been accustomed to speak for applause in the circles which he frequented, and seemed to think it necessary, in making the most common remark, to depart a little from the ordinary simplicity of language, and to couch it in something of epigrammatic point. In his praise and censure he was so decisive, as to render a dissent from his judgment, difficult to

* The reader has seen at page 355, Vol. IV., that the poet's house consisted of two storeys and an attic.

† These must have been the Election Ballads of 1790, given at pp. 127, 132, and 149, Vol. III.

be reconciled with the laws of good breeding. His wit was not more licentious than is unhappily too venial in higher circles, though I thought him rather unnecessarily free in the avowal of his excesses. Such were the clouds by which the pleasures of the evening were partially shaded, but frequent corruscations of genius were visible between them. When it began to grow late, he showed no disposition to retire, but called for fresh supplies of liquor, with a freedom which might be excusable, as we were in an inn, and no condition had been distinctly made, though it might easily have been inferred, had the inference been welcome, that he was to consider himself as our guest, nor was it till he saw us worn out, that he departed, about three in the morning, with a reluctance which probably proceeded less from being deprived of our company, than from being confined to his own.

"Upon the whole, I found this last interview not quite so gratifying as I had expected; although I discovered in his conduct no errors which I had not seen in men who stand high in the favor of society, or sufficient to account for the mysterious insinuations which I heard against his character. He, on this occasion, drank freely without being intoxicated, a circumstance from which I concluded, not only that his constitution was still unbroken, but that he was not addicted to solitary cordials; for if he had tasted liquor in the morning, he must have yielded to the excess of the evening."

Professor John Wilson—the "Christopher North" of criticism and the belles-lettres—made several observations on the above narration which it will be well to quote, by way of antidote to the depressing effect of Walker's style. We do so, however, in a greatly abridged form:—

"Is this the spirit in which people with strong propensities for poetry are privileged to write of poets, long after they had been gathered to their rest? No tenderness—no pity—no respect—no admiration—no gratitude—no softening of heart—no kindling of spirit—no recollection of his final farewell of Robert Burns! If the interview had not been satisfactory, those two days should have worn to him (who had known Burns in better times) a mournful complexion; and the more so, if he believed Burns to have been then a ruined man in *character*, which he had once prized above *life*. On the first day the poet conducted his old acquaintance through some of his beautiful haunts, and for his amusement set off some of his electioneering squibs, which are among the best ever composed, and, Whiggish as they are, might have tickled a

Tory as they jogged along; but Jos. thought them 'inferior to his other pieces.' Perhaps they walked as far as Lincluden, where the bard would repeat his famous fragment* of an 'Ode to Liberty' with 'marked and peculiar energy.' The listener ought to have lost his wits, and to have leapt sky-high. But he felt himself called by the voice that sent him on that mission, to rebuke the bard on the banks of his own river; for 'he showed a disposition (which however was easily repressed) to throw out political remarks, of the same nature with those for which he had been reprehended.' What right had Josiah Walker to repress any remarks made, in the confidence of friendship, by Robert Burns? And what power? Had Burns chosen it, he could as easily have *squabashed* Josiah as thrown him into the Nith.

"The record of the second day is shameful. To ask any person, however insignificant, to your inn, and then, in a private letter, find fault with him for keeping you out of bed, would not be gentlemanly; but of such offence many years after his death publicly to accuse Burns! No mention is made of dinner; therefore we may assume that Burns had dined at home. However, he gave up two days to the service of his friend, and his friend's friend, and such was his reward. Why did not this dignified personage 'repress' Burns's licentious wit as well as his political opinions? And if it was 'not more licentious than is unhappily too venial in higher circles,' why mention it at all? Yet this wretched mixture of meanness, worldliness, and morality, interlarded with some liberal sentiment, and spiced with spite, absolutely seems intended for a VINDICATION!

"Josiah Walker, who was himself, if we mistake not, for a good many years in the Customs or Excise at Perth, will not allow Burns to have been even a good gauger. He tells us that 'the Board of Excise had no power to indulge their poetical taste, or their tenderness for him by whom it had been gratified, at the expense of the public. Burns was therefore in a place where he could turn his peculiar endowments to little advantage; and where he could not, without injustice, be preferred to the most obtuse and uninteresting of his brethren, who surpassed him in the humble recommendation of exactness, vigilance, and sobriety.'—Not for worlds would we say a single syllable derogatory from the merits of the Board of Excise. Its desire and its impotency to promote

* "A fragment," as quoted in Mrs. Dunlop's letter, page 138, *supra*, was all that Professor Wilson knew of.—G. G.

Burns are granted; but of what incorrectness had Burns been guilty, which it would have been criminal in the Board to pardon? By whom, among the 'most obtuse and uninteresting of his brethren,' had he been surpassed in exactness, vigilance, or sobriety? Not by a single one. Read the testimony of his supervisor, Mr. Findlater, and of James Gray, the teacher of his children, and a close observer of their father's habits and qualities. Nothing, we repeat, shall tempt us to blame or abuse the Board. But we venture humbly to confess that we do not clearly see that the Board would have been 'gratifying its tenderness at the expense of the public' had it, when told by Burns that he was disabled by the hand of God from performing actively the duties of his temporary supervisorship, requested *its maker* to continue him for a few months on his full salary (£70 a year) instead of reducing it to one-half—not because he was a genius, a poet, and the author of many immortal productions—but merely because he was a disabled exciseman, and moreover the father of a few mortal children, who with their mother were in want of bread."

There had been a long cessation in our poet's supply of lyrical musings for Thomson's publication, in consequence of an interruption to that work, caused by the war with France. Pleyell, who supplied Thomson with the harmonies and accompaniments to the songs, was held in thraldom by the democrats who ruled his country, and prevented any export of his compositions across the English channel. About the close of August, however (a propitious month for the muse of Burns), our poet showed indications of activity in the song department, and for a whole year thereafter, his communications to Thomson flowed on uninterruptedly. The first of these was ON THE SEAS AND FAR AWAY, which has some excellent stanzas, although it never became a popular song:—

Peace, thy olive wand extend
And bid wild War his ravage end—
Man with brother Man to meet,
And as a brother kindly greet;
Heav'n shall then with prosperous gales
Fill my sailor's welcome sails,
And to my arms their charge convey—
My sailor lad that's far away.

In explanation of the following letter, Cromek tells us that Mr. Miller, younger of Dalswinton, had represented to Mr.

Perry, proprietor of the London *Morning Chronicle*, the insufficiency of Burns's salary to meet the outlay consequent on the requirements of his numerous family. They accordingly suggested a plan of settling the poet in London, and Mr. Perry made Burns a handsome offer of an annual stipend for the exercise of his talents, in his newspaper. The poet's reasons for refusing that offer are given in this letter.

(2) TO PATRICK MILLER, JUN., ESQ., M.P.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

DUMFRIES, *Nov.* 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,—Your offer is indeed truly generous, and most sincerely do I thank you for it; but in my present situation, I find that I dare not accept it. You well know my political sentiments; and were I an insular individual, unconnected with a wife and a family of children, with the most fervid enthusiasm I would have volunteered my services: I then could and would have despised all consequences that might have ensued.

My prospect in the Excise is something; at least it is, encumbered as I am with the welfare, the very existence of near half-a-score of helpless individuals—what I dare not sport with.

In the mean time, they are most welcome to my Ode;* only, let them insert it as a thing they have met with by accident and unknown to me.—Nay, if Mr. Perry, whose honor, after your character of him, I cannot doubt; if he will give me an address and channel by which any thing will come safe from those spies with which he may be certain that his

* We have already suggested, at page 3, *supra*, that the "Ode" here referred to, was not "Bruce's Address to his Troops," which had already been freely acknowledged and circulated in manuscript by its author; but a later composition, and one which he would be more disposed to see anonymously printed, namely, the "Ode for General Washington's Birthday," as he called it in his letter to Mrs. Dunlop, page 137, *supra*; otherwise the ODE TO LIBERTY, page 3, *supra*.

correspondence is beset, I will now and then send him any bagatelle that I may write. In the present hurry of Europe, nothing but news and politics will be regarded; but against the days of Peace, which heaven send soon, my little assistance may perhaps fill up an idle column of a newspaper. I have long had it in my head to try my hand in the way of little prose essays, which I propose sending into the world through the medium of some newspaper; and should these be worth his while, to these Mr. Perry shall be welcome; and all my reward shall be, his treating me with his paper; which, by the bye, to any body who has the least relish for wit, is a high treat indeed. With the most grateful esteem, I am ever, dear Sir, &c.

R. B.

(40) TO MRS. DUNLOP OF DUNLOP.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

DUMFRIES, 20*th December* 1794.*

I HAVE been prodigiously disappointed in this London journey of yours. In the first place, when your last to me reached Dumfries, I was in the country, and did not return until too late to answer your letter; in the next place, I thought you would certainly take this route: and now I know not what is become of you, or whether this may reach you at all. God grant that it may find you and yours in prospering health and good spirits. Do let me hear from you the soonest possible.

As I hope to get a frank from my friend Captain Miller, I shall, every leisure hour, take up the pen and gossip away whatever comes first, prose or poesy,

* Dr. Currie misdated this letter "December 1795;" the true date is rendered obvious by its contents. The period of the temporary Supervisorship is made certain in the correspondence with George Thomson.

sermon or song. In this last article I have abounded of late. I have often mentioned to you a superb publication of Scottish songs which is making its appearance in your great metropolis, and where I have the honor to preside over the Scottish verse, as no less a personage than Peter Pindar does over the English.

December 29th.

Since I began this letter, I have been appointed to act in the capacity of Supervisor here, and I assure you, what with the load of business, and what with that business being new to me, I could scarcely have commanded ten minutes to have spoken to you, had you been in town, much less to have written you an epistle. This appointment is only temporary, and during the illness of the present incumbent; but I look forward to an early period when I shall be appointed in full form—a consummation devoutly to be wished! My political sins seem to be forgiven me.

A.D., 1795.

(n) TO MRS. DUNLOP OF DUNLOP.

(CURRIE, 1800, continuation of the foregoing letter.)

[*Jan.* 1, 1795.]

THIS is the season (New-year's day is now my date) of wishing; and mine are most fervently offered up for you! May life to you be a positive blessing while it lasts, for your own sake; and that it may yet be greatly prolonged is my wish for my own sake, and for the sake of the rest of your friends! What a transient business is life! Very lately I was a boy; but t'other day I was a young man; and I already begin to feel the rigid fibre and stiffening joints of old

age coming fast o'er my frame. With all my follies of youth and, I fear, a few vices of manhood, still I congratulate myself on having had in early days religion strongly imprinted on my mind. I have nothing to say to any one as to which sect he belongs, or what creed he believes; but I look on the man who is firmly persuaded of Infinite Wisdom and Goodness superintending and directing every circumstance that can happen in his lot,—I felicitate such a man as having a solid foundation for his mental enjoyment; a firm prop and sure stay in the hour of difficulty, trouble, and distress; and a never-failing anchor of hope when he looks beyond the grave.

* * * * *

12th January 1795.

You will have seen our worthy and ingenious friend the Doctor long ere this. I hope he is well, and beg to be remembered to him; I have just been reading over again, I dare say for the hundred-and-fiftieth time, his "View of Society and Manners;" and still I read it with delight. His humor is perfectly original: it is neither the humor of Addison, nor Swift, nor Sterne, nor of anybody but Dr. Moore. By the bye, you have deprived me of "Zeluco;" remember *that* when you are disposed to rake up the sins of my neglect from the ashes of my laziness. He has paid me a pretty compliment by quoting me in his last publication.* R. B.

This year opened with the composition of a song which bears the stamp of Burns as eminently as a gold sovereign does the head of the reigning monarch. On or about New Year's Day, the poet commenced a letter to Thomson in which he transcribed his world-famous effusion beginning

"Is there for honest poverty
That hangs his head an' a' that."

* EDWARD, a novel, by John Moore, M.D.

He resumed his letter thus:—"*Jan.* 15*th*.—The foregoing has lain by me this fortnight, for want of a spare moment. The Supervisor of Excise here being ill, I have been acting for him, and I assure you I have hardly five minutes to myself," &c.

These extra duties account for an apparent dearth in his correspondence at this period. We find him, early in February, inditing a song to Thomson from Ecclefechan, where his Excise avocations had led him, and shortly thereafter he became intensely interested in the progress of an Election contest for the representation of the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright. The brightened prospect held out by a slight rise of salary at this time, seems to have suggested to Burns the duty of remitting part payment of the arrears of rent he owed to his generous landlord, Captain Hamilton of Allershaw. There exists a holograph fragment which formed the enclosure of that remittance, couched in these terms:

(²) TO CAPTAIN JOHN HAMILTON.

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)

DUMFRIES, *Jan.* 1795.

I ENCLOSE you three guineas, and shall soon settle all with you. I shall not mention your goodness to me; it is beyond my power to describe either the feelings of my wounded soul at not being able to pay you as I ought, or the grateful respect with which I have the honor to be, Sir, your deeply obliged humble servant, ROBT. BURNS.

Of the above, the acknowledgment has been preserved as follows:—

TO MR. ROBERT BURNS.

(CHAMBERS, 1852.)

DUMFRIES, 30*th Jan.* 1795.

DEAR SIR,—At same time that I acknowledge the receipt of three guineas to account of house-rent, will you permit me to enter a complaint of a different nature? When you first came here I courted your acquaintance; I wished to see you;

I asked you to call in and take a family-dinner now and then, when it suited your convenience.

For more than twelve months, you have never entered my door, but seemed rather shy when we met. This kept me from sending you any further particular invitation.

If I have in any shape offended, or from inadvertency hurt the delicacy of your feelings, tell me so, and I will endeavor to set it to rights.

If you are disposed to renew our acquaintance, I will be glad to see you to a family-dinner at three o'clock on Sunday, and, at any rate, hope you will believe me, dear Sir, your sincere friend. JOHN HAMILTON.

(3) TO CAPTAIN HAMILTON.

(CHAMBERS, 1852.)

Saturday Morn, [14*th Feb.* 1795.]

SIR,—I was from home, and had not the opportunity of seeing your more than polite, most friendly card. It is not possible, most worthy Sir, that you could do anything to offend anybody. My backwardness proceeds alone from the abashing consciousness of my obscure station in the ranks of life. Many an evening have I sighed to call in and spend it at your social fireside; but a shyness of appearing obtrusive amid the fashionable visitants occasionally there, kept me at a distance. It shall do so no more. On Monday I must be in the country, and most part of the week; but the first leisure evening I shall avail myself of your hospitable goodness. With the most ardent sentiments of gratitude and respect, I have the honor to be, Sir, your highly obliged, humble servant, ROBT. BURNS.

Robert Chambers here remarks that Burns sets forth a rather weak and improbable excuse for keeping at a distance from the friendly Captain. His shyness must have arisen partly from "the sense of his obligation as Hamilton's debtor, and partly from the consciousness that he was under the ban

of a large part of respectable society on account of politics, the Riddell quarrel, and his own many imprudences. But, on the other hand, the warmth of Hamilton's letter shows tolerably well how Burns was beginning to recover the good graces of the respectables." Even Maria Riddell about this time made a movement towards a reconciliation with the poet, as several of his letters to her evince.

(12) TO MRS. WALTER RIDDELL.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

[*March*, 1795.]

MR. BURNS'S compliments to Mrs. Riddell—is much obliged to her for her polite attention in sending him the book. Owing to Mr. B. being at present acting as Supervisor of Excise, a department that occupies his every hour of the day, he has not that time to spare which is necessary for any *belle-lettre* pursuit; but, as he will in a week or two again return to his wonted leisure, he will then pay that attention to Mrs. R.'s beautiful song "To thee, lov'd Nith," which it so well deserves.*

When *Anacharsis' Travels*† come to hand, which Mrs. Riddell mentioned as her gift to the public

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* This is an elegant pastoral song which appeared in the *Edinburgh Magazine*, *Nov.* 1795. It seems pretty certain that Mrs. Riddell intended it as a poetical expression of her feelings concerning the recent estrangement between Burns and her. Chambers says that in sending it to him for criticism, the lady seems to have thought it proper "that Burns should, in the way of his art, help to polish the shaft of tender reproach aimed at his own bosom." Eight lines of it will suffice as a sample:—

"I love thee, Nith, thy banks and braes,
Though sad Remembrance wakes the tear;
For there he rov'd that broke my heart,
Yet to that heart, ah, still how dear!

The flowers of Spring, how gay they bloom'd,
When last with him I wander'd here!
The flowers of Spring have pass'd away
For Wintry horrors dark and drear."

† See note, page 83, *infra*.

library, Mr. B. will thank her for a reading of it, previous to her sending it to the library, as it is a book he has never seen, and he wishes to have a longer perusal than the regulations of the library allow.

Friday Eve.

P.S.—Mr. Burns will be much obliged to Mrs. Riddell if she will favor him with a perusal of any of her poetical pieces which he may not have seen.

DUMFRIES, 1795.

(1) TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING CHRONICLE.*

(CROMEK, 1808.)

DUMFRIES, 1795.

SIR,—You will see by your subscribers' list, that I have now been about nine months one of that number.

I am sorry to inform you, that in that time, seven or eight of your papers either have never been sent me, or else have never reached me. To be deprived of any one number of the first newspaper in Great Britain for information, ability and independence, is what I can ill brook and bear; but to be deprived of that most admirable oration of the marquis of Lansdowne, when he made the great, though ineffectual attempt (in the language of the poet, I fear too true), 'to save a SINKING STATE,'† this was a loss which I neither can, nor will forgive you.—That paper, Gentlemen, never reached me, but I demand it of you. I am a BRITON, and must be interested in the cause

* Cromek in a note informs us that a neighbor of the poet's at Dumfries, who was a subscriber to this paper, complained to him of its irregular delivery. "Why don't you," replied Burns, "write to the Editor about it?" The man expressed his inability to do so, and with a view to serve him, the poet wrote the letter in the text, which, however, was never forwarded.

† The speech referred to was delivered on the 30th December 1794.

of LIBERTY:—I am a MAN, and the RIGHTS OF HUMAN NATURE cannot be indifferent to me. However, do not let me mislead you: I am not a man in that situation of life, which, as your subscriber, can be of any consequence to you, in the eyes of those to whom SITUATION OF LIFE ALONE is the criterion of MAN.—I am but a plain tradesman, in this distant, obscure country town; but that humble domicile in which I shelter my wife and children, is the CASTELLUM of a BRITON; and that scanty, hard-earned income which supports them, is as truly my property, as the most magnificent fortune, of the most PUISSANT MEMBER of your HOUSE of NOBLES.

These, Sir, are my sentiments; and to them I subscribe my name: and were I a man of ability and consequence enough to address the PUBLIC, with that name should they appear.—I am, &c.

LOVE-LETTERS DICTATED FOR AN HONEST FARMER,

WHO HAD NOT LEARNED THE ART OF COURTSHIP.

(CHAMBERS, 1852.)*

MADAM,—What excuse to make for the liberty I am going to assume in this letter, I am utterly at a loss. If the most unfeigned respect for your accomplished worth—if the most ardent attachment—if sincerity and truth—if these, on my part, will in any degree weigh with you, my apology is these, and these alone. Little as I have had the pleasure of your acquaintance, it has been enough to convince me

* Our readers are indebted to the late Dr. Carruthers, of the *Inverness Courier*, for having picked up these two love drafts. They still exist in the poet's holograph. The farmer, in his extremity, applied to Burns for a cast of his hand, and, although the letters are rather stiff in manner, we are told that the suit was successful.

what enviable happiness must be his whom you shall honor with your particular regard, and more than enough to convince me how unworthy I am to offer myself a candidate for that partiality. In this kind of trembling hope, Madam, I intend very soon doing myself the honor of waiting on you, persuaded that however little Miss G——— may be disposed to attend to the suit of a lover as unworthy of her as I am, she is still too good to despise an honest man, whose only fault is loving her too much for his own peace.—I have the honor to be, Madam, your most devoted humble servant.

DEAR MADAM,—The passion of love had need to be productive of much delight; as where it takes thorough possession of the man, it almost unfits him for anything else. The lover who is certain of an equal return of affection, is surely the happiest of men; but he who is a prey to the horrors of anxiety and dreaded disappointment, is a being whose situation is by no means enviable. Of this, my present experience gives me sufficient proof. To me, amusement seems impertinent, and business intrusion, while you alone engross every faculty of my mind. May I request you to drop me a line, to inform me when I may wait upon you? For pity's sake, do; and let me have it soon. In the meantime allow me, in all the artless sincerity of truth, to assure you that I truly am, my dearest Madam, your ardent lover, and devoted humble servant.*

* The foregoing letters are composed much in the style of those to Ellison Begbie, of the author's youthful days. In 1852, the original draughts were possessed by Mr. Wm. Smith, perfumer, Dumfries.

(1) TO MR. HERON, OF HERON.

(CURRIE, 1800, and CROMEK, 1808.)

[DUMFRIES, *March* 1795.]

SIR,—I enclose you some copies of a couple of political ballads, one of which, I believe, you have never seen. Would to Heaven I could make you master of as many votes in the Stewartry! but

> "Who does the utmost that he can,
> Does well, acts nobly—angels could do no more."

In order to bring my humble efforts to bear with more effect on the foe, I have privately printed a good many copies of both ballads, and have sent them among friends all over the country. To pillory on Parnassus the rank reprobation of character, the utter dereliction of all principle, in a profligate junto which has not only enraged virtue, but violated common decency, which spurns even hypocrisy as paltry iniquity below their daring,—to unmask their flagitiousness in the broadest day, to deliver such over to their merited fate, is surely not merely innocent, but laudable—is not only propriety, but virtue. You have already as your auxiliary the sober detestation of mankind on the head of your opponents; and I swear by the lyre of Thalia to muster on your side all the votaries of honest Laughter, and fair, candid Ridicule! I am extremely obliged to you for your kind mention of my interests in a letter which Mr. Syme showed me. At present, my situation in life must be in a great measure stationary, at least for two or three years. The statement is this:—I am on the Supervisor's list, and as we come on there by precedency, in two or three years I shall be at the head of that list, and be appointed *of course*. *Then*, a FRIEND

might be of service to me in getting me into a place of the Kingdom which I would like. A Supervisor's income varies from about £120 to £200 a year; but the business is an incessant drudgery, and would be nearly a complete bar to every species of literary pursuit. The moment I am appointed Supervisor, in the common routine, I may be nominated on the Collector's List: and this is always a business purely of political patronage. A Collectorship varies much, from better than £200 a year to near £1,000. They also come forward by precedency on the list; and have, besides a handsome income, a life of complete leisure. A life of literary leisure with a decent competence, is the summit of my wishes. It would be the prudish affectation of silly pride in me to say that I do not need, or would not be indebted to, a political friend; at the same time, Sir, I by no means lay my affairs before you thus, to hook my dependent situation on your benevolence. If, in my progress of life, an opening should occur where the good offices of a gentleman of your public character and political consequence might bring me forward, I shall petition your goodness with the same frankness as I now do myself the honor to subscribe myself, &c. R. B.

The ballads enclosed in the foregoing letter will be found at pp. 69, 71, 75, *supra*. The election-contest there celebrated had arisen in consequence of the death of General Stewart, M.P. for the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright in January preceding. The Tory candidate was Mr. Thomas Gordon of Balmaghie, supported by Murray of Broughton, and the Earl of Galloway. The Whig candidate was the gentleman above addressed, to whom Burns, in company of John Syme, and Mr. David M'Culloch of Ardwell, had paid a visit in June 1794. The election resulted in Mr. Heron's favor, but he had not long entered on his parliamentary duties when a dissolution occurred, which brought on a fresh struggle in 1796. Burns, although then on his death-bed, produced a bitter ballad against Mr. Heron's opponents; but he did not survive to learn the result of the election, which was also in favor of Mr. Heron. Alas!

for the poet's hopes of Excise promotion from that quarter, and alas! for the instability of human affairs; the result of that election was challenged and subjected to the judgment of a committee by whose award Mr. Heron was unseated. The decision seems to have broken his heart, for he died on his way down to Scotland.

(11) TO MR. JAMES JOHNSON, ENGRAVER, LAWNMARKET, EDINBURGH.

WITH A PARCEL.

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)*

DUMFRIES, *March* 1795.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—For Hyslop's plate, many thanks for your goodness: I have made him a present of it—a present he well deserved at my hand. Thank you likewise for the copies of my Volunteer Ballad: our friend has done indeed well! 'Tis chaste and beautiful; I have not met with anything has pleased me so much. You know I am no connoisseur; but that I am an amateur will be allowed me. I return you your packet of Songs; and in a day or two, by post, expect to hear at large from yours affectionately,

R. BURNS.

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* From the original MS. in the British Museum. The "plate" supplied to Mr. Hyslop, landlord of the Globe Tavern, seems to have been an engraved Bill-heading. The volunteer ballad will be found at page 86, *supra*, with reference to its melody, composed by Mr. Stephen Clarke. Burns had joined a Volunteer corps, being one of two companies which were raised in Dumfries, early in 1795.

(1) TO RICHARD A. OSWALD, ESQ., OF AUCHINCRUIVE.

ENCLOSING SOME ELECTION BALLADS.

(CHAMBERS, 1852.)

DUMFRIES, 23*d April* 1795.

SIR,—You see the danger of patronising the rhyming tribe: you flatter the poet's vanity—a most potent ingredient in the composition of a son of rhyme—by a little notice; and he, in return, persecutes your good nature with his acquaintance. In these days of volunteering, I have come forward with my services as poet-laureate to a highly respectable political party, of which you are a distinguished member. The enclosed are, I hope, only a beginning to the songs of triumph which you will earn in that contest.

I have the honor to be, Sir, your obliged and devoted servant, ROBT. BURNS.

(1) TO MR. JOHN EDGAR, EXCISE OFFICE, EDINBURGH.

(CHAMBERS, 1852.)*

SIR,—I understand that I am to incur censure by the Wine account of this District not being sent in. Allow me to state the following circumstances to you, which, if they do not apologise for, will at least extenuate, my part of the offence.

The General Letter was put into my hands sometime about the beginning of this month, as I was then in charge of the District, Mr. Findlater being indisposed. I immediately, as far as in my power,

* The original MS. of this important letter was recently possessed by John Adam, Esq., Greenock, now deceased.

made a survey of the Wine Stocks; and where I could not personally survey, I wrote the officer of the Division. In a few days more, and previous to collection-week, Mr. Findlater resumed charge; and as, in the course of collection, he would have both the officers by him, and the old books among his hands, it very naturally occurred to me the Wine account business would rest with him. At the close of that week, I got a note from the collector that the account-making-up was thrown on my hands. I immediately set about it; but one officer's books (James Graham of Sanquhar) not being at hand, I wrote to him to send me them by first post. Mr. Graham has not thought proper to pay the least attention to my request, and to-day I have sent an express for his stock-book.

This, Sir, is a plain state of facts; and if I must still be thought censurable, I hope it will be considered that this officiating job being my first, I cannot be supposed to be completely master of all the etiquette of the business.

If my supposed neglect is to be laid before the Honorable Board, I beg you will have the goodness to accompany the complaint with this letter. I am, Sir, your very humble servant,

ROBT. BURNS.

DUMFRIES, 25 *April* 1795.

This is the second time in the course of the poet's correspondence (see June 1791, Letter to A. Findlater) in which he pleads guilty of some degree of remissness in his Excise duties. Dr. Waddell has pointed out another instance, recorded in Alex. Findlater's "Round Diary, 10th June to 21st July, 1792," where Burns is "admonished" for some inadvertences which are thus palliated in the Supervisor's report: "An increase of stock wanting permit on the *first* of 7 gallons, and on the *second* of 6 gallons foreign red wine not seized—probably a miscalculation of this large stock, &c., with some trivial inadvertences which I have marked with my initials. Mr.

Burns promises, and I believe will bestow, due attention in future; which indeed he is very rarely deficient in." Robert Chambers has referrred to another instance of "admonishment" administered to our poet, similarly recorded by Findlater in his *Round Diary*, June 7th to July 18th 1795. We have been favored with a perusal of that document by its present possessor, C. C. Maxwell, Esq., Dundee; along with some correspondence between Chambers and its *then* possessor, the late John Corbet, Esq., Collector of Excise, Dundee. Mr. Corbet wrote, in Dec. 1853: "The within diary is the only one of Findlater's in my possession. It is accompanied by a fragment of earlier date, in shape of a characteristic letter from the Bard to his accomplished Supervisor. It is dated from Ellisland, and shows that their intercourse was not always official. But Findlater became aged and devout, and would not give me the part with his address attached." (*See* page 357, Vol. III.)

Chambers, in returning to Mr. Corbet the *Diary* of Findlater, says, "It is curious as showing Burns, the only one of a dozen officers, under any censure, and, as might be expected, that he was not quite the most perfect gauger in the world, as well as the most brilliant poet." We note that in the *Diary* of 1795 Burns is set down as being "35," instead of 36, years old, with *eight* of a family. At that date he had only five lawful children; but with the *Globe Tavern* little Bess added, the parents would complete the number, *eight* of a family; the age of John Lewars is there recorded as being 30, and Findlater's is set down at 37.

(1) TO JOHN SYME, ESQ., DISTRIBUTOR OF STAMPS.

ENCLOSING A SONG.*

(CURRIE, 1800.)

[DUMFRIES, *May* 1795.]

YOU know that among other high dignities, you have the honor to be my supreme court of critical

* This was "O wat ye wha's in yon toun," given at page 67, *supra*, a song originally intended to celebrate the poet's own Jean; but whether she was Mrs. Burns, or Jean Lorimer, it is needless to inquire. By changing "Jeanie" into *Lucy* it was made to fit his purpose of paying a compliment to the young and beautiful wife of an Ayrshire gentleman of great wealth, who might have an opportunity of doing the author some service. Mr. Oswald was married to Miss Lucy Johnston of Hilton, in April 1793; but she soon fell into declining health, and died of consumption at Lisbon in January 1798, in her 31st year.

judicature, from which there is is no appeal. I enclose you a song which I composed since I saw you, and I am going to give you the history of it. Do you know that among much that I admire in the characters and manners of those great folks whom I have now the honor to call my acquaintances—the Oswald family, for instance, there is nothing charms me more than Mr. Oswald's unconcealable attachment to that incomparable woman? Did you ever, my dear Syme, meet with a man who owed more to the Divine Giver of all good things than Mr. O.? A fine fortune, a pleasing exterior, self-evident amiable dispositions, and an ingenuous, upright mind; and that informed, too, much beyond the usual run of young fellows of his rank and fortune: and to all this, such a woman!—but of her I shall say nothing at all, in despair of saying anything adequate.* In my song I have endeavored to do justice to what would be his feelings on seeing, in the scene I have drawn, the habitation of his Lucy. As I am a good deal pleased with my performance, I, in my first fervor, thought of sending it to Mrs. Oswald, but, on second thoughts, perhaps what I offer as the honest incense of genuine respect might, from the well-known character of poverty and poetry, be construed into some modification or other of that servility which my soul abhors. Do let me know, some convenient moment ere the worthy family leave town, that I *with propriety* may wait on them. In the circle of the fashionable herd, those who come either to show their own consequence, or

* Charles Kirkpatick Sharpe has left a MS. note on this subject, much too good to be withheld here:—"This song celebrates an early friend of mine, Mrs. Oswald, born Lucy Johnstone. One of the stanzas is nothing but 'Were I laid on Greenland's coast,' in *the Beggar's Opera*. At the time Burns wrote these verses, the fair Lucinda was well turned of thirty, and ten years older than her husband; but still a charming creature. In truth, however, she looked like the mother of her husband, who had a remarkably youthful appearance. Venus and Cupid! I have seen and been acquainted with all Burns's ladies whom he has celebrated, saving Miss Alexander and Mrs. M'Lehose, and I could describe their dresses as well as their features."

to borrow consequence from the visit—in such a mob I will not appear; mine is a different errand.

Yours, ROBT. BURNS.

To this year (1795) has been assigned by previous editors the composition of the severe verses "On the destruction of the Woods of Drumlanrig,"* given at page 50, Vol. IV., which—on the supposition that they were really written by Burns—we ventured to record at an earlier date. In a MS. correspondence between Cromek, while editing his "Reliques of Burns," and Mr. Creech of Edinburgh, which we lately perused, some grave doubt is thrown on the authenticity of that poem. Mr. Cromek, in replying to his correspondent, thus writes:—"You mention a poem said to be by Burns, called 'Nith Personified:' I have it not. I think I have seen something of this kind conveying satire to the Duke of Queensberry, for cutting down and selling trees; but, as I was told it was really written by Mr. M'Kenzie, I did not presume to meddle with it."

(4) TO WM. CREECH, ESQ., PUBLISHER,† EDINBURGH.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

DUMFRIES, 30*th May* [1795].

SIR,—I had intended to have troubled you with a long letter, but at present the delightful sensations of an omnipotent Toothache‡ so engross all my inner man, as to put it out of my power even to write

* The reader may be reminded that it first appeared in the *Scots Magazine* of Feb. 1803. In 1817 it was included in a privately-printed book, entitled "Poems on several occasions," which were understood to be chiefly the productions of collector Dunlop of Greenock.

† This letter appears already at page 284, Vol. III., where, in our "carefulness" of collating with Gilfillan, Chambers and others, we imagined that we had discovered an omission of Douglas', but out of respect to his care we repeat it here with his notes.—G. G.

‡ Cromek's erroneous date to this letter (May 1789) has led the poet's chronologists all astray about the composition of his "Address to the Toothache." Seeing that Burns here alludes to suffering from that complaint, they have assumed the date of the letter to be that of the poem, which was really composed in 1786. Burns complains of toothache in a letter to George Thomson about this very period.

nonsense. However, as in duty bound, I approach my Bookseller with an offering in my hand—a few poetic clinches and a song. To expect any other kind of offering from the Rhyming Tribe, would be to know them much less than you do. I do not pretend that there is much merit in these *morceaux*, but I have two reasons for sending them; *primo*, they are mostly ill-natured, so are in unison with my present feelings, while fifty troops of infernal spirits are riding post from ear to ear along my jaw-bones; and *secondly*, they are so short that you cannot leave off in the middle, and so hurt my pride in the idea that you found any work of mine too heavy to get through.

I have a request to beg of you, but conjure you—by all your wishes, and by all your hopes, that the Muse will spare the satiric wink in the moment of your foibles; that she will warble the song of rapture round your Hymeneal couch; and that she will shed on your turf the honest tear of elegiac gratitude! Grant my request as speedily as possible: send me by the very first fly or coach for this place, three copies of the last edition of my Poems, which place to my account.

Now, may the good things of Prose, and the good things of Verse, come among thy hands until they be filled with the *good things of this* Life, prayeth

ROBT. BURNS.

Cromek recorded this letter, most erroneously, as having been written from Ellisland in May 1789. We have been privileged to see the original MS. in possession of Mr. Creech's representatives, and find that although the *year* is not given, the poet has most distinctly written "Dumfries, 30th May." Among the "poetic clinches" (seventeen in number) are included several epigrams which are known to have been produced during our author's latter years, and in particular, the lines "On seeing Mrs. Kemble in Yarico, 24th October 1794." The absolute certainty of *our* date is proved by the song inclosed

in the letter, namely, "My Chloris, mark how green the groves," which was written for Thomson in November 1794.

We have also been favored with a perusal of several letters addressed by Cromek to Creech in 1808, in which he tries to frighten the Bookseller to give him some of the poet's manuscripts "to be substituted for several severe remarks on your conduct towards him, which I am about to print and could wish to suppress." By this means he squeezed out of Mr. Creech copies of the Selkirk letter with the admired poem "Willie's Awa'," and also the present one with its seventeen epigrams. In one of these letters he thus writes:—"It is not my intention to give the least offence to living characters—I mean, to such as are worthy of respect; those who are not, Burns has gibbeted them, and I shall not presume to cut them down. To give you my opinion candidly, though I think most highly of Dr. Currie's performance, yet I must say that the fear of giving offence has led him to disfigure the work most strangely. He has cut away one of Burns's testicles entire; but I hope it will never be said of me that I lent a hand to complete the operation.

"To say nothing of whole letters, I have cut away passages of letter after letter that relate to you, till my volume is considerably decreased in its size; and I do assure you, you are the only person to whom I have acted so delicately, *with the exception of a few letters of a very private nature addressed by the poet to Mrs. Burns.* You will be surprised when I say that such has been my industry, and the ardor of my enthusiasm, that Burns scarcely ever wrote a Paper of which either the Original or a copy of it has not fallen into my hands—even to his very Journals and private Memorandum-books."

Of the letter in the text (page 90 *Reliques*) Cromek writes to Creech:—"The whole strain is so much in your favor, and at the same time the compliment is so delicate, that I declare to you, the gentlemen here to whom I have read it are quite *jealous*. I don't know whether it is not as characteristic of Burns as anything in the whole volume." In his Table of contents, Cromek styles its latter paragraphs as "another specimen of the Bathos"! The prior specimen of Bathos pointed out by Cromek, is in the poet's letter to Mr. Morrison, p. 211, Vol. III.

Among the epigrammatic pieces communicated to Mr. Creech at this time, we find the following:—

ON A LADY REQUESTING ME TO GIVE HER A SPRAY OF BLOSSOM'D THORN.

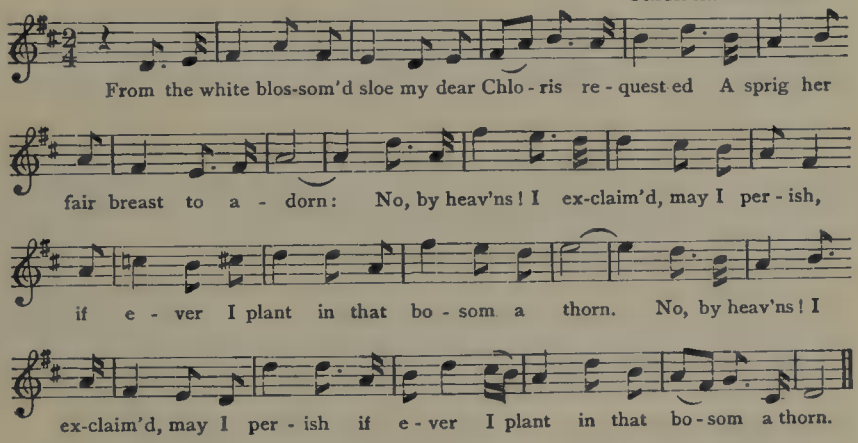
From the white-blossom'd sloe my dear Chloris requested
A sprig her fair breast to adorn:
No, by heavens! I exclaim'd, let me perish if ever
I plant in that bosom a thorn.

(*See* page 25, *supra*.)

Cromek was much taken with this epigram, and tried to persuade Mr. Creech to forward to him the poet's autograph, in order that he might engrave the lines in fac-simile; but the cautious publisher was not so to be caught. Cromek therefore did not even print the epigram, his excuse for excluding it being its prior publication by Thomas Stewart in 1802. The lines were set to music by W. Shield, and published as a sheet song, early in the present century, with four very commonplace lines added by Charles Dibdin, to give it reasonable length for a song. The following original air for the words has been composed by the musical friend who has helped us in that department of this work.

THE THORN.

ORIGINAL MELODY.



We have had few opportunities in the prose portion of these volumes to refer to this flaxen-haired beauty who inspired so many of our author's songs composed for Thomson's Collection; but before we quit that stage in the biography where her spell over the poet's musings reached its climax, and then suddenly collapsed in gloom, we are constrained to advert to

her story. There is some difficulty in determining at what particular period Burns began to adopt her as a kind of artistic life-model, to aid him in giving freshness and vitality to his lyrical effusions. The song of Craigieburn Wood—a product of the Ellisland period—was, as we have seen, composed to forward the wooing-efforts of a brother-exciseman, John Gillespie, who had conceived a violent affection for Jean Lorimer, which did not become mutual. Chambers gives "March 1793" as the date of her romantic but unfortunate marriage to Whelpdale, and informs us that in a few months thereafter she returned to her parents at Kemishall. Burns was then resident in Dumfries, and very much engrossed with the capricious flirtations of Mrs. Maria Riddell. It has not been explained how our poet had such frequent meetings with *Chloris*, if she continued to reside at Kemishall, which is about five miles above Dumfries; the probability therefore is that instead of returning to her parents after parting with Whelpdale she made Dumfries her home. So early, however, as New Year's Day 1793—some three months prior to her marriage, if Chambers be correct in his date—she really was the subject of the song, "O Poortith cauld, and restless Love," then communicated to Thomson. The lines

> "Her een sae bonie blue betray
> How she repays my passion;
> But prudence is her o'erword ay—
> She talks o' rank and fashion,"

and, indeed, the whole song might pass for another bout of vicarious wooing for John Gillespie. But in April 1793 (one month after the understood date of Miss Lorimer's marriage), Burns wrote to Thomson, "I have vowed to have a song to the air of *Cauld Kail*, on the lady whom I attempted to celebrate in the verses, 'Poortith cauld, and restless Love,'" which accordingly he accomplished in August following, by producing the song, "Come let me take thee to my breast." In that effusion, however, there is not a trace of the pleading of a despairing lover:—

> "And do I hear my Jeanie own
> That equal transports move her?
> I ask for dearest life alone,
> That I may live to love her."

In the same sheet which conveyed that song, Thomson received "O whistle and I'll come to you, my lad," which the poet

afterwards directly assigned to Chloris—"Thy Jeanie will venture wi' ye, my lad." Not however till September 1794 did the reign of "Chloris" fairly set in:

"Sae flaxen were her ringlets,
Her eyebrows of a darker hue,
Bewitchingly o'er-arching
Twa laughin een o' bonie blue.
Her's are the willing chains o' love
By conquering Beauty's sovereign law;
And still my Chloris' dearest charm—
She says she lo'es me best o' a'."

In 1794 Burns presented to Miss Lorimer (for she had discarded the name of Whelpdale) a copy of the Poems of Wm. Collins, with this inscription:—

"To Jean Lorimer, a small but sincere mark of Friendship from ROBT. BURNS."

(*under which the lady has written*) "JANE LORIMER, 1794."*

Down to 3rd August 1795, when our author sent to Thomson two of his very finest songs, of which "Chloris" is the theme, she continued to be the mistress of his musings, if not of his heart:

"She's bonie, bloomin, straught and tall,
And lang has had my heart in thrall;
And ay it charms my very saul,
The kind love that's in her e'e."

and that other one so exquisite in its purity—

"Yon rosebuds in the morning dew,
How pure among the leaves sae green,
But purer was the lover's vow
They witness'd in their shade yestreen."

Within a day or two after these songs were posted to Thomson, as we learn from the two following letters, an Edinburgh associate for whom Burns had a high respect, and

* The volume is in the possession of W. R. M'Diarmid, Esq., late of Dumfries, now in Edinburgh. On one of its fly-leaves are seen some faint pencillings in the poet's handwriting by way of an attempt, in Collins's manner, to compose an Ode on the Battle of Bannockburn; an idea evidently thrown aside for that of his simple and grand lyric—"Bruce's Address to his Troops."

who was a great enthusiast in Scottish minstrelsy, Mr. Robert Cleghorn, paid him a visit at Dumfries, accompanied by two friends, Mr. Wight and Mr. Allan, one or both of whom were also farmers. Our poet resolved to give them an entertainment in his own house, and Jean Lorimer and her father were invited to meet them there. It is thus very satisfactory to know that his intercourse with Chloris was of no clandestine character. At that meeting Mrs. Burns could not fail to delight the company with her "woodnote wild," giving effect to some of the very songs which "Chloris" had inspired. It appears certain that she did sing one of these—a fresh effusion, to the beautiful Gaelic tune, called "Morag," which so delighted Cleghorn that on his return to Edinburgh he wrote for a copy of it.

(1) TO MR. WM. LORIMER, SENIOR, FARMER.

(Douglas, 1877.)

My dear Sir,—I called for you yesternight, both at your own house, and at your favorite lady's—Mrs. Hyslop of the Globe—but could not find you. I want you to dine with me to-day. I have two honest Midlothian Farmers with me, who have travelled threescore miles to renew old friendship with the poet; and I promise you a pleasant party, a plateful of hotchpotch, and a bottle of good sound port.

Mrs. Burns desired me yesternight to beg the favor of Jeany to come and partake with her, and she was so obliging as to promise that she would. Jeany and you [*Mr. Syme, Dr. Maxwell, and Dr. Mundell] are all the people, besides my Edinburgh friends, whom I wish to see; and if you can come I shall take it very kind. Yours, Robt. Burns.

(Dinner at three.)

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* The original MS. is mutilated here: the blank is supplied from the information contained in subsequent letters, the connection between which and the present one is very apparent. Taken from a newspaper cutting from the *Inverness Courier* by the late Dr. Carruthers of Inverness.

(8) TO MR. ROBERT CLEGHORN, FARMER.

SAUGHTON, NEAR EDINBURGH.

(DR. WADDELL'S ED., 1869.)

DUMFRIES, 21*st Aug.* 1795.

MY DEAR CLEGHORN,—Inclosed you have Clarke's "Gaffer Gray."* I have not time to copy it, so when you have taken a copy for yourself, please return me the original. I need not caution you against giving copies to any other person. "Peggy Ramsay"† I shall expect to find in Gaffer Gray's company, when he returns to Dumfries.

I intended to have taken the advantage of the frank, and given you a long letter; but cross accident has detained me until the Post is just going. Pray, has Mr. Wight got the better of his fright?‡ and how is Mr. Allan? I hope you got all safe home. Dr. Maxwell and honest John Syme beg leave to be remembered to you all. They both speak in high terms of the acquisition they have made to their acquaintance. Did Thomson meet you on Sunday? If so, you would have a world of conversation. Mrs. Burns joins in thanks for your obliging, very obliging visit.

Yours ever, R. BURNS.

P.S.—Did you ever meet with the following, "Todlin Hame," by the late Mr. M'Culloch, of Airdwell, Galloway?

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* The "Gaffer Gray" here spoken of was certainly not the one by Holcroft, beginning "Why dost thou shiver and shake, Gaffer Gray," but some wild parody of it, in character with other free productions composed by our author for his Crochallan friends.

† See page 57, *supra*.

‡ Mr. Wight had been alarmed by a thunder-storm while on his visit.

(1) TO DAVID STAIG, ESQ., PROVOST OF DUMFRIES.

(Dr. Waddell's Ed., 1869.)*

I know, Sir, that anything which relates to the burgh of Dumfries's interests will engage your readiest attention, so shall make no apology for this letter. I have been for some time turning my attention to a branch of your good town's revenue, where I think there is much to amend; I mean the "Twa pennies" on ale. The Brewers and Victuallers within the jurisdiction pay accurately; but three common brewers in the Bridgend, whose consumpt is almost entirely in Dumfries, pay nothing; the Annan Brewer, who daily sends in great quantities of ale, pays nothing; because in both cases, ale certificates are never asked for; and of all the English ale, porter, &c., scarcely any of it pays. For my part, I never recorded an ale certificate in Dumfries, and I know most of the other officers are in the same predicament. It makes no part of our official duty, and besides, until it is universally assessed on all dealers, it strikes me as injustice to assess one. I know that our Collector has a per centage on the collection; but as it is no great object to him he gives himself no concern about what is *brought in* to the town. Our supervisor would suit you better. He is an abler and a keener man, and, what is all-important in the business, such is his official influence over, and power among his offrs. that were he to signify that

* This letter, which manifests the writer's business talents as well as the strong interest he took in the affairs of his adopted town, was first printed in the *Dumfries Courier* in 1858, and thereafter in connection with a pamphlet on the Established Churches of Dumfries by Mr. Wm. R. M'Diarmid, in 1865.

Provost Staig obtained an opinion of Counsel on the question started by Burns, which confirmed the poet's views. The matter was brought before the Town Council of the burgh on the 17th of July 1796, only four days before the poet's death. The impost was accordingly levied, and continued to be so till the Reform Bill of 1832 put an end to it.

such was his wish, not a "pennie" would be left uncollected. It is by no means the case with the Collector. The offrs. are not so immediately among his hands, and they would not pay the same attention to his mandates. Your brewers here, the Richardsons, one of whom, Gabriel, I survey, pay annually in "twa pennies," about thirty pounds, and they complain, with great justice, of the unfair balance against them in their competition with the Bridgend, Annan, & English traders. As they are respectable characters, both as citizens and men of business, I am sure they will meet with every encouragement from the Magistracy of Dumfries. For their sakes partly I have interested myself in this business, but still much more on account of many obligations which I feel myself to lie under to Mr. Staig's civility and goodness. Could I be of the smallest service in anything which he has at heart, it would give me great pleasure. I have been at some pains to ascertain what your annual loss on this business may be, and I have reason to think it may amount fully to one-third of what you at present receive. These crude hints, Sir, are entirely for your private use. I have by no means any wish to take a sixpence from Mr. Mitchell's income; nor do I wish to serve Mr. Findlater; I wish to show any attempt I can to do anything that might declare with what sincerity I have the honor to be, Sir, your obliged humble servant, ROBT. BURNS.

Friday noon, [1795.]

P.S.—A variety of other methods might be pointed out, and will easily occur to your reflection on the subject. R. B.

([13]) TO MRS. RIDDELL, HALLEATHS.

(Dr. Waddell's Ed., 1869.)*

[*Aug.* 1795.]

I have perused with great pleasure your elegiac verses. In two or three instances I mark inequalities, rather than faults. A line that in an ordinary mediocre production might pass, not only without censure, but with applause, in a brilliant composition glares in all its native halting inferiority. The last line of the second stanza I dislike most. If you cannot mend it (I cannot, after beating my brains to pap), I would almost leave out the whole stanza. *A Dieu je vous recommende.* R. B.

([14]) TO MRS. WALTER RIDDELL, HALLEATHS.†

(Dr. Waddell's Ed., 1869.)

[Dumfries, *Aug.* 1795.]

Madam,—I think there is little doubt but that your interest, if judiciously directed, may procure a Tide-waiter's place for your protegé Shaw; but alas, that is doing little for him! Fifteen pounds per ann. is the salary, and the perquisites, in some lucky stations, such as Leith, Glasgow, or Greenock, may be ten more; but in such a place as this, for instance, they will hardly amount to five. The appointment is not in the Excise, but in the Customs. The way of getting appointed is just the application of Great Folks to the Commissioners of the Customs: the Almanack will give you their names. The Excise is a superior object, as the salary is fifty per annum. You mention

* The original MS. was possessed by the late John Adam, Esq., Greenock.

† The original of this letter is in the possession of Robt. Clarke, Esq., Cincinnati, Ohio.

that he has a family; if he has more than three children, he cannot be admitted as an Excise Officer. To apply there is the same business as at the Customs. Garthland, if you can command his sincere zeal in the cause, is, I think, able to do either the one or the other. Find out, among your acquaintances, who are the private friends of the Commissioners of the particular BOARD, at which you wish to apply, and interest them—the more, the better. The Commissioners of both Boards are people quite in the fashionable circle, and must be known to many of your friends. I was going to mention some of your female acquaintance, who might give you a lift, but, on recollection, your interest with the WOMEN is, I believe, a sorry business. So much the better! 'tis God's judgment upon you for making such a despotic use of your sway over the MEN. *You* a Republican! You have an Empire over us; and you know it too; but the LORD'S holy name be praised, you have something of the same propensity to get giddy (intoxicated is not a lady's word) with power; and a devilish deal of aptitude to the same blind, undistinguishing FAVORITISM which makes other Despots less dangerous to the welfare and repose of mankind than they otherwise might be.

So much for scolding you.

I have perused your MSS. with a great deal of pleasure. I have taken the liberty to make a few marks with my pencil, which I trust you will pardon. —Farewell! R. BURNS.

([15]) TO MRS. WALTER RIDDELL, HALLEATHS.

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)*

DUMFRIES, *Sep.* 1795.

MADAM,—A severe domestic misfortune has put all literary business out of my head for some time past. Now I begin to resume my wonted studies. I am much correspondence in your debt: I shall pay it soon. Clarke's Sonatas are of no use to me, and I beg you will keep them.

That you, my Friend, may never experience such a loss as mine, sincerely prays R. B.

The "domestic misfortune" lamented in the above note was the death of his daughter Elizabeth Riddell (born 21st Nov. 1792), who, being in feeble health, was sent for change of air to the Armours in Mauchline, where she died in the autumn of this year, and was buried in the churchyard there.

At the period we have now reached, not only was the poet's harp "hung on the willow trees," but even his correspondence seems to have been suspended; none of it, at all events, has been preserved. The particulars, or rather want of particulars, in Dr. Currie's account of our author's last illness and death, are far from satisfactory; although he tells his readers that these "were obligingly furnished by Dr. Maxwell, the physician who attended him." Gilbert Burns, who, along with Mr. John Syme, made a journey to Liverpool to put into Dr. Currie's hands, and to arrange, the materials for the poet's biography, was afterwards taken to task, for having allowed what are called Dr. Currie's "injurious misrepresentations of Burns's character" to pass unchallenged. He thus replied: "The Doctor's work was not submitted to me in manuscript, nor, as far as I know, to any of my brother's friends at Dumfries;†

* From the original MS. in the possession of Alex. J. Warden, Esq., Marybank House, Broughty Ferry.

† True, Gilbert did not see Currie's *manuscript*, but proof-sheets of the work may occasionally have been submitted to him. Dr. Currie's words in the preface to his second edition are these:—"The Biographer of Burns was naturally desirous of hearing the opinion of the friend and brother of the poet, on the manner in which he had executed his task, before a second edition should be committed to the press. He had the satisfaction of receiving this opinion, in a letter dated 24th of August, approving of the life in very obliging terms, and offering one or two trivial corrections, as to names and dates chiefly, which are made in this edition."

so I had it not in my power to set him right in that particular. And considering the excellence of the biography upon the whole, and how much we owed him for that stupendous exertion of his benevolence, I never took any notice to him of my disapprobation, or of the inconsistency of that part of his work."—*Letter to Peterkin*, 1814.

Gilbert, in excuse for Dr. Currie, blames the poet's Dumfries friends, or associates, for having propagated damaging reports which the good Biographer "thought it necessary to state in substance, lest the candor of his work should be called in question." In the reprint of Currie's edition which Gilbert edited in 1820, he made the following hard hit at his *quondam* colleague, John Syme:—"Great injury to the Poet's character seems to have arisen from people pretending friendship and intimacy with him, who wished to have something wonderful to tell of a person who had attracted so much of the notice of the world. It is well known that many persons are to be found, whose code of moral obligation does not prevent them from violating truth in embellishing a story, and yet are esteemed by the world *very honorable men*. In the pictures which such men give of life and character, likeness is deliberately sacrificed to effect. Thus, in the foolish story of a sword-cane, brought forward in the *Quarterly Review*, the vanity of some pretended friend of the Poet is displayed by the relation of a powerful admonition addressed by the narrator to the Poet, producing such theatrical starts and agitation, as no one who knew the Poet, or who has even attentively perused his letters and poetry, can give credit to for a moment."

That Syme enjoyed the full confidence and friendship of the poet down to the very close of this year, is evinced by the Epigram which the latter sent to him in reply to an invitation to dine, with a promise of the best company and the best cookery.

"No more of your guests, be they titled or not,
And cookery the first in the nation;
Who is proof to thy personal converse and wit,
Is proof to all other temptation.

DUMFRIES, 17*th Dec.* 1795."

Mr. Syme, who was born four years before Burns, survived till November 1831. He had, in his own pictorial way, told the "sword-cane story" referred to by Gilbert; and Scott thus introduced it in his Review of Cromek's Reliques:—"It is a

dreadful truth, that when racked and tortured by the well-meant and warm expostulations of an intimate friend, Burns at length started up in a paroxysm of frenzy, and drawing a sword-cane, which he usually wore, made an attempt to plunge it into the body of his adviser. The next instant, he was with difficulty withheld from suicide." How true it is that a scandalous tale loses nothing in conveyance, is proved by a comparison of the Reviewer's version with that of the first narrator, which we give in Syme's own words:—"In my parlor at Ryedale, one afternoon, Burns and I were very gracious and confidential. I did advise him to be temperate in all things. I might have *spoken* daggers, but I did not mean them. He shook to the inmost fibre of his frame—drew the sword-cane,* when I exclaimed, 'What! wilt thou thus, and in my own house?' The poor fellow was so stung with remorse, that he dashed himself down on the floor. That ebullition of momentary irritation was followed by a friendship more ardent than ever between us."—*Peterkin's Edition of Burns*, 1815, page lxiv., Vol. I.

It has been ascertained that in course of the year 1795 our poet was, through the medium of Mrs. Walter Riddell, brought into correspondence with William Roscoe of Liverpool. A copy of that author's once very popular song—

> "O'er the vine-covered hills and gay lilies of France
> See the day-star of Liberty rise,"

still exists in Burns's hand-writing, copied out by him and presented to Mrs. Riddell. After our poet's death, that lady forwarded the copy to Mr. Roscoe, who, in acknowledging receipt of it, said that "Burns, about the time he was seized with his fatal illness, was preparing to make a journey to Liverpool to see him, and had done him the honor of writing him to that effect."†

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* The identical sword-cane of Burns is now preserved in his monument at Edinburgh—a presentation by the sons of the poet.

† Life of Roscoe, Vol. I., page 233.

A.D., 1796.

"When ance Life's day draws near the gloamin,
Then fareweel vacant, careless roamin;
And fareweel cheerfu' tankards foamin,
And social noise;
And fareweel dear, deludin woman,
Thou joy of joys!"

THERE cannot be a doubt that Dr. Currie was made fully acquainted with all the habitual failings as well as the peculiar excellences of Burns, by those who supplied him with the materials for his great biographical undertaking. It was indispensable that the most damaging facts as well as those most favorable and complimentary, should have been thus communicated; and, on the whole, if we except some considerable overstatement as to the enormity of the poet's drinking habits, Currie's misrepresentations cannot be very heinous.* In giving a private account of his own labors to a correspondent, that kindly-natured and able writer thus remarked:—"The errors and faults, as well as the excellences, of Burns's life and character afford scope for painful and melancholy observation. This part of the subject must be touched with great tenderness; but it *must* be touched. If his friends do not touch it, his enemies will. To speak my mind to you freely, it appears to me that his misfortunes arose chiefly from his errors. *That* it is unnecessary, and indeed improper, to say; but his biographer must keep it in mind, to prevent him from running into those bitter invectives against Scotland, &c., which the extraordinary attractions and melancholy fate of the poet naturally provoke. Six Liverpool poets have sung the requiem of our admired bard; and every one of them has indulged in the most pointed, and in some degree unjust, invectives against the country and the society in which he lived."

The above quotation will throw some light on the remark of Gilbert Burns, that Dr. Currie thought it necessary, lest the candor of his work should be called in question, to state the substance of the damaging reports laid before him; even though this might present an exaggerated view of the poet's failings at that period of his life. With this preparation, we now quote the much-challenged paragraphs in Dr. Currie's narrative

* It should be borne in mind that Dr. Currie, in his medical works, took every opportunity to advocate the duty of abstinence from alcoholic liquors.

which are so essential to the completeness of this part of the biography :—

"Upwards of a year before his death, there was an evident decline in our poet's personal appearance, and though his appetite continued unimpaired, he was himself sensible that his constitution was sinking. His temper now became irritable and gloomy; he fled from himself into society, often of the lowest kind. And in such company, that part of the convivial scene, in which wine increases sensibility and excites benevolence, was hurried on to reach the succeeding part, over which uncontrolled passion generally presides. He who suffers the pollution of inebriation, how shall he escape other pollution?* But let us refrain from the mention of errors over which delicacy and humanity draw the veil.

"From October, 1795, to the January following, an accidental complaint confined him to the house. A few days after he began to go abroad, he dined at a tavern, and returned home about three o'clock in a very cold morning, benumbed and intoxicated. This was followed by an attack of rheumatism, which confined him about a week. His appetite now began to fail; his hands shook, and his voice faltered on any exertion or emotion. His pulse became weaker and more rapid, and

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* This is the stinging part of Dr. Currie's account of the poet's errors which all the censors of that Biographer have fastened upon as a kind of blasphemy against Burns. We indeed wish he had omitted those *thirteen words*, even although the omission might have rendered his picture incomplete. There exists evidence to show that he refers here to a fact that was reluctantly confided to him by Dr. Maxwell, which he felt constrained to "touch with great tenderness." Alas! the record was closed eighty years ago, and no reverential eulogist of these days can hope to wipe out the stain by gushing tears or flowing rhetoric. Many of the best qualities of Burns took their luxuriant vigor from the baser propensities of his nature, and so we must be content with the entire Burns. Chambers thus supports Dr. Currie :—"The poet's convivialities occurred, during the latter years of his life, with a degree of frequency, and were carried to a degree of excess which were much to be deplored. That he spent too many evenings in this way for the comfort of his family, for his own health and peace of mind, and for the preservation of his dignity as a man and a poet, I believe to be true. Nor was this all, for that co-ordinate debasement to which Currie alludes, was not escaped. Let God judge him, a being formed in frailty, and inspired with wild and misdirected impulses; not I."—Vol. IV., p. 305.

[We think that the stale, improbable story to which Mr. Douglas alludes is sufficiently contradicted in the fact that he names Dr. Maxwell as the authority confirmatory thereof. Maxwell was, first of all, a physician, who, by virtue of his oath on receiving his diploma, was bound to secrecy as to the ailments of his patients. He was, moreover, one of Burns's closest and dearest friends, and a boon companion, a radical sympathizer—the admirer of his genius and a friend and benefactor to his family. We do not, for one moment, believe that the ailment to which Currie alludes, in connection with Burns, ever existed; and we certainly refuse to believe that Dr. Maxwell ever breathed it to any man, if it ever had existence.—G. G.]

pain in the larger joints, and in the hands and feet, deprived him of the enjoyment of refreshing sleep. Too much dejected in his spirits, and too well aware of his real situation to entertain hopes of recovery, he was ever musing on the approaching desolation of his family, and his spirits sunk into an uniform gloom."

Not altogether "uniform" was the gloom which hung around the hapless bard in these latter days. He did not forget his own philosophy in the song "Contented wi' little, and cantie wi' mair," which he had given to the world as "a picture of his own mind."

> "Blind Chance, let her snapper and stoyte on her way,
> Be't to me, be't frae me, e'en let the jade gae:
> Come ease, or come travail, come pleasure or pain,
> My warst word is 'Welcome, and welcome again!'"

He had occasion, at the close of the year 1795, to borrow a guinea from Collector Mitchell, and the request, thrown into the old familiar epistle-style of versification, is couched in five stanzas in his happiest humorous manner. The postscript thus refers to his severe illness:—

> "Ye've heard this while how I've been licket,
> And by fell Death was nearly nicket:
> Grim loon! he gat me by the fecket,
> And sair me shook,
> But by gude luck I lap a wicket
> An' turn'd a neuk."

He had not forgot his promise to Cleghorn to forward him a copy of what appears to have been the last song that was inspired by the witchery of Jean Lorimer—a song which seems to have been sung at the little dinner-party in the poet's house, already noticed, on the occasion of Cleghorn's visit to Dumfries in August preceding. He took the first opportunity presented by returning strength to write to the hearty farmer, enclosing him the song he had so much admired.

(9) TO MR. ROBT. CLEGHORN, SAUGHTON MILLS.

PER FAVOR OF MR. MUNDELL, SURGEON.

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)*

SONG.—THE LASSIE O' MY HEART.

Tune—"Morag."

O wat ye wha that loes me,
And has my heart a keeping?
O sweet is she that loes me,
Like dews o' summer weeping,
In tears the rosebud steeping, &c.

(*See* page 103, *supra*.

MY EVER DEAR CLEGHORN,—The foregoing had been sent you long ago, but for reasons which you may have heard. Since I saw you, I have been much the child of disaster. Scarcely begun to recover the loss of an only daughter and darling child, I became myself the victim of a rheumatic fever which brought me to the borders of the grave. After many weeks of a sick-bed, I am just beginning to crawl about.

Thanks—many thanks for my "Gawin Douglas." This will probably be delivered to you by a friend of mine, Mr. Mundell, Surgeon, whom you may remember to have seen at my house. He wants to enquire after Mr. Allan. Best compliments to the amiablest of my friends, Mrs. Cleghorn, and to little Miss, though she will scarce remember me; and to my thunder-scared friend, Mr. Wight.

Yours, R. BURNS.

[DUMFRIES, *Jan.* 1796.]

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* The original MS. was in the possession of the late David Laing, Esq., LL.D., Edinburgh.

([12]) TO MR. JAMES JOHNSON, ENGRAVER,

MUSIC SHOP, LAWNMARKET, EDINBURGH.

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)*

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Mr. Clarke will have acquainted you with the unfortunate reasons of my long silence. When I get a little more health you shall hear from me at large on the subject of the songs.

I am highly pleased with Hyslop's bill; only you have, in your usual luck, misspelt two words: the article "Postages and porter," you have made "Porterages and porter"—pray alter that. In the article "Pipes and Tobacco," you have spelt Tobacco thus: "Tobbacco," whereas it ought to be spelt with a single b, thus, "Tobacco." When you have amended these two faults, which please do directly, throw off four hundred copies, and send them by the very first coach or fly. Farewell, my ever-valued friend!

R. BURNS.

Wednes. Noon, [*January* 1796.]

([16]) TO MRS. WALTER RIDDELL, HALLEATHS.

(CURRIE in part, and completed in DOUGLAS, 1877.)†

DUMFRIES, 29*th January* 1796.

I CANNOT express my gratitude to you for allowing me a longer perusal of "Anacharsis." In fact, I never met with a book that bewitched me so much; and I,

* This note refers to the matter alluded to in the letter (11) page 159, *supra*. Burns had made a present to his kind host and hostess at "The Globe," of an engraved heading for their tavern bill. The poet's holograph was possessed by the late David Laing, Esq., LL.D., Edinburgh.

† The original MS.—a long communication of three folio pages, lately belonging to Dr. Corrie of Belfast—was sold, with other manuscripts of the poet, on 5th June, 1878, at Messrs. Puttick and Simpson's Salesrooms, London, for twenty-six guineas.

as a member of the library, must warmly feel the obligation you have laid us under. Indeed, to me the obligation is stronger than to any other individual of our society, as "Anacharsis" is an indispensable desideratum to a son of the Muses.*

The health you wished me in your morning's card is, I think, flown from me for ever. I have not been able to leave my bed to-day till an hour ago. These wickedly unlucky advertisements I lent (I did wrong) to a friend, and I am ill able to go in quest of him.

The Muses have not quite forsaken me. The following detached stanzas I intend to interweave in some disastrous tale of a shepherd "despairing beside a clear stream."

L'amour, toujours l'amour!

The trout in yonder wimpling burn
  That glides, a silver dart,
And safe, beneath the shady thorn,
  Defies the angler's art—
My life was ance that careless stream,
  That wanton trout was I;
But Love wi' unrelenting beam,
  Has scorch'd my fountains dry, &c.

(*See* page 102, *supra.*)

[On the same sheet the poet transcribed several of his songs—the ballad of "Bonie Jean" among these, and then continued his letter thus.]

I cannot help laughing at your friend's conceit of my picture, and I suspect you are playing off on

* The ancient *Anacharsis* was a Scythian philosopher who travelled to Athens in the time of Solon, and who, after being instructed in Greek science and literature, returned home with a view to introduce there the customs and institutions of Greece. This brought on him the enmity of his countrymen, and he was assassinated by the barbarian king. The modern "Anacharsis" was Baron Jean Baptiste Clootz, a Prussian by birth, but brought up in Paris (1755–94), where he adopted the Revolutionary principles, and styled himself "The Orator of the Human Race." The published travels and opinions of this latter hero would undoubtedly find admiration and sympathy from Maria Riddell and Robert Burns.

Robert Burns (aged 35),
and his eldest son (aged 8).

(THE KERRY MINIATURE)

me some of that fashionable wit, called *humbug*. Apropos to pictures, I am just sitting to Reid in this town for a miniature, and I think he has hit by far the best likeness of me ever taken.* When you are at any time so idle in town as to call at Reid's painting room, and mention to him that I spoke of such a thing to you, he will show it to you, else he will not; for both the miniature's existence and its destiny are an inviolable secret, and therefore very properly trusted, in part, to you.

Have you seen Clarke's Sonatas, the subjects from Scots Airs? If not, send for my copy. R. B.

([17]) TO MR. PETER HILL, BOOKSELLER, CROSS, EDINBURGH.

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)†

DUMFRIES, 29 *Jan.* 1796.

MY DEAR HILL,—By the chaise, the driver of which brings you this, I send your annual Kipper; but on the express condition that you do not, like a fool as you were last year, put yourself to five times the value in expense of a return.

I have just time to beg that you will make my best compliments to my fair friend Mrs. Hill, Cameron "my kinsman," and Ramsay, "my yoke-fellow in the Lord!" God be with you all! In a week or ten days, thou shalt hear at large from thine,

R. BURNS.

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* See page 192, *infra*, for some further account of this miniature.

† From the poet's holograph, in possession of Mr. Hill's grandson, George Wilson, Esq. The reader has been informed in a note at page 141, *supra*, respecting Cameron and Ramsay.

(41) TO MRS. DUNLOP, OF DUNLOP.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

DUMFRIES, 31*st January*, 1796.

THESE many months you have been two packets in my debt.* What sin of ignorance I have committed against so highly valued a friend, I am utterly at a loss to guess. Alas! Madam, ill can I afford, at this time, to be deprived of any of the small remnant of my pleasures. I have lately drunk deep of the cup of affliction. The autumn robbed me of my only daughter and darling child, and that at a distance too, and so rapidly as to put it out of my power to pay the last duties to her. I had scarcely begun to recover from that shock, when I became myself the victim of a most severe rheumatic fever, and long "the die spun doubtful;"† until after many weeks of a sick bed, it seems to have "turned up life," and I am beginning to crawl across my room, and once indeed have been before my own door in the street.

> What pleasure fascinates the mental sight,
> Affliction purifies the visual ray,
> Religion hails the drear, the untried night,
> That shuts, for ever shuts! life's doubtful day.

R. B.

There is a considerable discrepancy between our author's account of his own illness, and that given by Dr. Currie. Both agree as to the date—October 1795 to January 1796; but Burns describes his trouble as "a severe rheumatic fever," while Currie calls it "an accidental complaint, followed, in

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* "Two packets," probably one withheld, and the other of January 1795.

† "———————— th' important die
Of life and death spun doubtful ere it fell,
And turn'd up life."—*Young's Night Thoughts*, N. vi.

January, by an attack of rheumatism which confined him about a week." On 28th January the poet was sufficiently well to attend a Mason Lodge for the purpose of recommending the entry of a Liverpool merchant, and we have seen that on the following day he wrote to Mr. Peter Hill, without alluding to his illness. In February and March the virulence of his trouble seems to have somewhat abated; but in April, although able on one occasion to attend a Mason meeting, his illness became more alarming. He had intimated to Mrs. Dunlop, so early as June 1794, that he felt his health on the decline. "I am afraid," he wrote, "that I am about to suffer for the follies of my youth; my medical friends threaten me with a flying gout." So also he described his trouble in a letter to Thomson in the spring of 1796: "I have great hopes that the genial influence of approaching summer will set me to rights, but as yet I cannot boast of returning health. I have now reason to believe that my complaint is a flying gout—a damnable business!"

Several of the poet's biographers have noticed that in consequence of his political opinions and reckless indecorums, both of word and deed, while resident in Dumfries, some of his heartiest friends and admirers grew half-ashamed of being associated with him. To none does this observation apply more strongly than to his early friend Robert Ainslie, and to his patroness, Mrs. Dunlop. The last of his letters to the former is dated April 1793, about a year after which we find Burns thus writing of him to Mrs. M'Lehose: "I had a letter from him a while ago, but it was so dry, so distant, so like a card to one of his clients, that I could scarce bear to read it, and have not yet answered it. Though Fame does not blow her trumpet at my approach now as she did when he first honored me with his friendship, yet I am as proud as ever; and when I am laid in my grave, I wish to be stretched at my full length, that I may occupy every inch of ground I have a right to." A memorial of the poet's personal regard for Ainslie in shape of a presentation copy of his first Edinburgh edition, in which the blanks in the letterpress are carefully filled up in the author's hand-writing, was bought, not long after Ainslie's death, at a London book-stall for a few shillings. Add to this the fact that several letters of Burns to the same correspondent, intended to be strictly confidential, have in like manner found their way to the world, nobody knows how; and well might Dr. Waddell remark, as he has done, when referring to these matters: "There has been a want of sense or sympathy somewhere!"

Dr. Currie took special care that Mrs. Dunlop's desertion of Burns, for a period of about two years before he died, should not be "conspicuous by the absence" of letters bearing to have been written to her by the poet during that period. The correctly dated letter in the text complains of her long unaccountable silence; and yet Currie, evidently by design, has one of Burns's letters to her incorrectly dated only one month before, apologising for being so late in answering her last letter! By post-dating several of the poet's communications to her, he plunges into the grossest anachronisms, in the futile attempt to screen Mrs. Dunlop's defection from his reader's notice. A letter of 1793, he misdates 1795; and a similar journal-like communication of 1794, he misdates December 1795 and January 1796. We have restored to their proper position these misplaced letters, which indeed proclaim their own dates to any earnest reader. In a foot-note to the bard's last melancholy communication to Mrs. Dunlop, penned at Brow, Dr. Currie makes this unsupported observation: "Before he died, Burns had the pleasure of receiving a satisfactory explanation of his friend's silence, and an assurance of the continuance of her friendship to his widow and children. It is probable that the greater part of her letters to him were destroyed by the bard about the time this last letter was written. He did not foresee that his own letters to her were to appear in print, nor conceive the disappointment which will be felt that a few of this excellent Lady's have not served to enrich and adorn this collection."

Chambers, in contradiction of Currie's remark, has informed his readers that "after the death of Burns, Mrs. Dunlop paid a visit to her relative Dr. Currie, at Liverpool, to arrange respecting the publication of the correspondence, and she positively refused to allow any of her own letters to see the light. She concluded her interview by half-jestingly *purchasing back* her letters to Burns, one by one, laying down a letter of his for each one of her own till she obtained the whole, and then returned satisfied to Dunlop."

A letter of Gilbert Burns addressed to Dr. Maxwell of Dumfries only two months after the poet's death, has recently turned up, and in it the whole mystery concerning Mrs. Dunlop's letters to Burns is revealed. It not only overturns the pretty anecdote of Chambers about the lady's manner of purchasing them back, but reflects discredit on Dr. Currie's account of them noted above.

GILBERT BURNS TO DR. MAXWELL.

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)

MOSSGIEL, 25*th Sept.* 1796.

SIR,—I trouble you at this time on the subject of Mrs. Dunlop's letters. I wrote her on my return from Dumfries that it had been thought expedient to establish it as a rule, that the letters from my brother's correspondents found in his repositories should be retained till they would give up at least such of his letters in their hands as might suit publication. She replied that "anxious as she is for the recovery of her own letters, and awkward as she feels at their being in the hands of strangers; yet, so far from the retention of them answering the purpose intended, she must consider her doing anything in consequence of that threat, as betraying a conviction of some impropriety in her letters which she is not conscious of." I have been last week to wait on her at her own house, and she read to me all my brother's letters to her, numbering about seventy.* We marked those which we thought would at all suit publication in whole or in part, to the number of perhaps twenty or thirty, several of which, if I am not a partial judge, will do credit to the writer.

Mrs. Dunlop proposes copying all the letters marked, and she will allow the editor to compare with the originals such as may be selected for publication; but even this she does not allow me to say till she has got her own letters back, as she would not be supposed to do anything from the fear of their being retained. I beg, therefore, that her letters may be sent to me that I may forward them to her; for, besides the opinion I always had that we have no right to retain them, I am now convinced that it can serve no good purpose. Let the letters, such as are recovered, and the rest when they can be collected, be given to Mrs. Burns, who will send them by the carrier to me.—I am, sir, your most obedient servant,

GILBERT BURNS.

P.S.—My brother had promised Mrs. Dunlop a perusal of the letters he had collected for Mr. Riddell.† If these could be

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* The reader will note that all given for publication (42 letters) is little more than half.—G. G.

† The Glenriddell MSS. (letters). See letter to Mrs. Dunlop, page 138, and to Peter Hill, page 135, *supra*.—G. G.

sent to her along with her own letters, it would be very obliging to her. G. B.

The above letter of Gilbert's makes it very certain that Mrs. Dunlop's anxiety was speedily relieved on the subject of her correspondence with Burns. What she most dreaded was the public exposure of the fact that on her part the correspondence had been withdrawn during the last two years; and now that she was put in re-possession of her own letters, there could be no danger of their dates and contents indicating the awkward *hiatus* referred to. On the subject of such withdrawal of patronage and friendly intercourse in the poet's experience during his latter years, Professor Walker has some judicious observations that may be worth quoting here.

"In a town like Dumfries, after deducting the sober and self-respecting part of society, enough can still be found, and that too neither uninteresting nor unfashionable, by a man who has no dread of dissipation or impurity. In company of this description, Burns continued welcome to the last, but towards the close of his life, even this was not enough; and it is to be suspected that his aversion from domestic privacy, and his craving for convivial tumult, drove him sometimes to associates who disgraced him no less by the sordidness of their condition, than by the laxity of their characters.

"After all these admissions, however, it is but fair to add that the degree of disrepute to which Burns was condemned, could not, according to the practice of the world, be justified by the nature of his faults. We every day see men, who are addicted to sensual and social excess, in the enjoyment of general favor; and why, we may ask, was the Bard to be treated with less indulgence? The truth is that the world is a partial and self-interested censor, and will forgive the grossest vice far more readily than any instance of disrespect to itself. It will forgive the man who is at the trouble of attending to certain forms in the conduct and management of his immoralities, and though the veil he spreads be so transparent as to conceal nothing, yet, to be at the pains of spreading a veil at all, is a homage paid to public opinion, by which it is flattered into lenity. An attempt to cloak his practices is a declaration that he thinks them wrong; and, while injuring himself, he obtains some credit for trying to avoid an injury to the general principles of morality. But he who bids defiance to the world, and seems to deride its temporising virtue by indulging (in poverty) those open indecencies with which it submits to be

insulted only by wealth or power, soon finds the scorn thus expressed repaid with ample interest."

That Burns was somewhat straitened for money at this time is farther evinced by the contents of a letter addressed to him by James Clarke, the schoolmaster, in answer to a craving note in which the poet reminded him of a small advance he had helped him with some three years previously. Clarke's letter is as follows:—

"FORFAR, 18*th Feb.* 1796.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—Your letter makes me very unhappy; the more so, as I had heard very flattering accounts of your situation some months ago. A note [21 *sh.*] is enclosed; and if such partial payments will be acceptable, this shall soon be followed by more. My appointment here has more than answered my expectations; but furnishing a large house, &c., has kept me still very poor; and the persecution I suffered from that rascal, Lord Hopetoun, brought me into expenses which, with all my economy, I have not yet rubbed off. Be so kind as write me. Your disinterested friendship has made an impression which time cannot efface.—Believe me, my dear Burns, yours in sincerity, JAMES CLARKE."

During this month of February the correspondence with George Thomson was renewed after a pause of six months. Our author furnished one song of excellent structure, but in subject very unusual with him; personal attractions in a woman being dispensed with for the sake of her "acres o' charms," in the shape of well-stocked pastures and a handsome tocher. One passage in his letter which relates to "Chloris" is remarkable, as indicative of some change in his sentiments towards her, thus:—"In my by-past songs I dislike one thing—the name *Chloris*. I meant it as the fictitious name of a certain lady; but, on second thoughts, it is a high incongruity to have a Greek appellation in a Scottish pastoral ballad. What you once mentioned to me of 'flaxen locks' is just; they cannot enter into an elegant description of beauty."

We do not know what was Allan Cunningham's authority for the following passage regarding poor Chloris—quoted by Lockhart in 1828, while she was yet alive:—"The beauty of Chloris has added many charms to Scottish song; but that which has increased the reputation of the poet, has lessened that of the man. Chloris was one of those who believe in the dispensing power of beauty, and thought that love should be

under no demure restraint. Burns sometimes thought in the same way himself; and it is not wonderful, therefore, that the poet should celebrate the charms of a liberal beauty who was willing to reward his strains, and who gave him many opportunities of catching inspiration from her presence. The poet gave many a glowing picture of her youth, health, and voluptuous beauty; but let no lady envy the poetical elevation of poor Chloris; her situation in poetry is splendid; her situation in life merits our pity—perhaps our charity."

The reader has seen in the poet's letter to Mrs. Riddell of 20th January, that he was then sitting to an artist in Dumfries for his portrait in miniature, and that he considered it a very successful likeness. We publish from Dr. Waddell's edition of our Poet's works the miniature there referred to. It is not to be confounded with another miniature of the poet, mentioned by him in a letter to George Thomson, dated May 1795, where it is described as "a small miniature," then about to be sent to Edinburgh to be mounted and placed under crystal. That smaller one, which the poet characterised as "the most remarkable likeness of what I am at this moment," has not yet made its appearance in the hands of any collector, and is probably lost. The following note to Mrs. Riddell, which exists in the poet's holograph, evidently refers to a companion-picture—that of his eldest son, then in his tenth year, done at full-length by the same artist who executed the larger oval miniature of Burns above referred to.

([17]) TO MRS. WALTER RIDDELL, HALLEATHS.

(Dr. Waddell's Ed., 1869.)

Saturday, 6 *p.m.*

Par accident, meeting with Mrs. Scott* in the street, and having the miniature in a book in my pocket, I send you it, as I understand that a servant of yours is in town. The painter, in my opinion, has spoilt the likeness. Return me the bagatelle per first

* Mrs. Riddell then resided in the house of her friend, Mr. Scott of Tinwald. Dr. Waddell's edition also contains an engraving of the miniature here referred to as "the bagatelle," which is here engraved on the same plate with the poet's.—G. G.

opportunity.* I am so ill as to be scarce able to hold this miserable pen to this miserable paper.

R. B.

In April, the poet's friend Mrs. Hyslop, landlady of the Globe Tavern, paid a visit to Edinburgh, and was commissioned to call on George Thomson with a letter in which he expressed his despair of ever tuning his lyre again. On her return she was the medium of conveying to Burns the gold-mounted pebble seal, cut with his shield, crest, and motto,† which had been ordered from Cunningham two years previously. (See the letter to that correspondent of 3rd March 1794.) He had few opportunities of using it, and there is a melancholy story of his having pledged it to a publican near Brow for a bottle of wine, when hard pressed for money. It is now in the possession of the poet's great-granddaughter, Miss Martha Burns Everitt, Wexford, Ireland.

It would appear that during the six months preceding his decease, the Bard was not confined closely to bed till three days before his death. Mrs. Burns was greatly relieved, in her heavy but cheerfully performed task of soothing her husband's distress, by the kind attentions of Jessy Lewars, a sister of the poet's brother-exciseman. Their father, John Lewars, then deceased, had been a supervisor of Excise, a post to which the son afterwards attained. The latter was about six years younger than Burns, and at that time unmarried. He retired from the service in 1825, and died in 1826. In appreciation of the benevolent services of Jessie Lewars, our poet made her the subject of several delicate compliments in the form of epigrams and versicles which are recorded at page 124, and *infra*. To these he afterwards added two of his most admired songs, making her their special subject; the first of these—"Here's a health to ane I loe dear," was enclosed in a letter to Thomson about the 17th of May; the other, "O wert thou in the cauld blast," may have been of later date.‡

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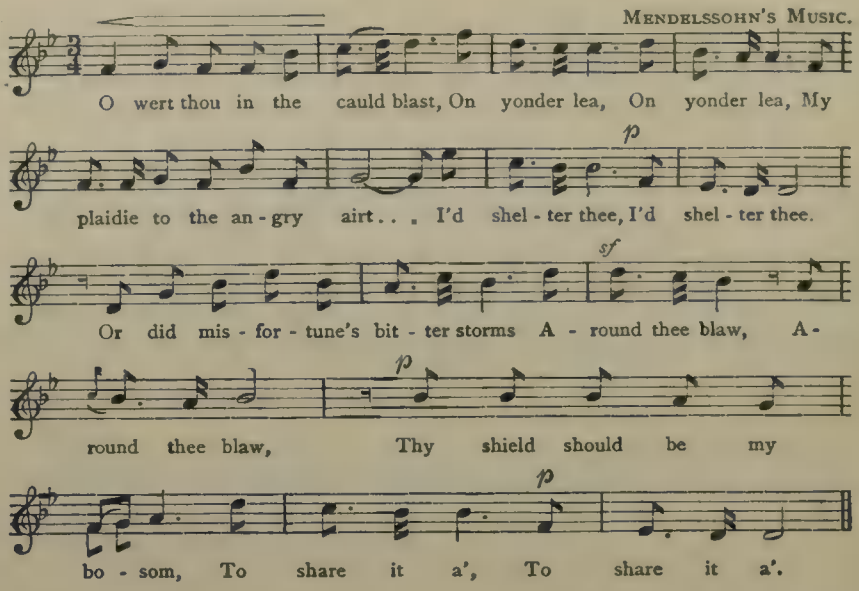
* Dr. Waddell gives an elaborate account of the romantic way in which both of these little oil paintings on panel came into his possession in 1866. For upwards of forty years previously they had belonged to an Irish gentleman near Limerick, who called his attention to them. But Dr. Waddell is wrong in surmising that Mrs. Riddell had connections in Ireland. Her second husband, Fletcher, was a Welshman; and she died, not in 1820, but in 1808, only eight months after her second marriage. She was buried at Chester.

† See page 400, Vol. IV.

‡ This interesting young woman was then eighteen years old; and within three years after the poet's death she became the wife of Mr. James Thomson,



(13) TO MR. JAMES JOHNSON, ENGRAVER, LAWNMARKET, EDINBURGH.

[*Per favor of Mr. Lewars.*]

(CROMEK, 1808.)

[DUMFRIES, 18*th May*, 1796.]

How are you, my dear Friend? and how comes on your fifth volume? You may probably think that for some time past I have neglected you and your work; but, alas, the hand of pain, and sorrow and care has these many months lain heavy on me! Personal and domestic affliction have almost entirely banished that alacrity of life with which I used to woo the rural

writer, Dumfries. On the occasion of the great Burns festival of 6th August 1844, on the banks of the Doon, Mr. and Mrs. Thomson occupied a place near the head of the table, on the chairman's right hand. Her husband died in 1849 at the age of seventy-five, and she survived till 26th May 1855, at the age of seventy-seven. According to a beautiful arrangement, Jessie Lewars was buried quite close to the mausoleum of Burns, the tombstone of the Thomsons being fixed in the wall on the south side thereof. A pilgrim who visited the resting-place of Burns on a bright but showery day, when the wind blew strong from the north-west, observing the tablet of Jessie Lewars to be quite dry, where all around was wet, regarded the circumstance as an illustration of the poet's lines addressed to her—"My plaidie to the angry airt—I'll shelter thee! I'll shelter thee!" (*See* pp. 109 and 129, *supra*.)

Muse of Scotia. In the meantime, let us finish what we have so well begun. The gentleman, Mr. Lewars, a particular friend of mine, will bring out any proofs (if they are ready) or any message you may have. Farewell! R. BURNS.

Turn over.

[*June* 16.]—You should have had this when Mr. Lewars called on you, but his saddle-bags miscarried. I am extremely anxious for your work, as indeed I am for everything concerning you and your welfare. You are a good, worthy, honest fellow, and have a good right to live in this world, because you deserve it. Many a merry meeting this Publication has given us, and possibly it may give us more, though, alas! I fear it. This protracting, slow, consuming illness which hangs over me, will, I doubt much, my ever dear friend, arrest my sun before he has well reached his middle career, and will turn over the Poet to far other and more important concerns than studying the brilliancy of Wit, or the pathos of Sentiment. However, Hope is the cordial of the human heart, and I endeavor to cherish it as well as I can. Let me hear from you as soon as convenient. Your Work is a great one; and though now that it is near finished, I see, if we were to begin again, two or three things that might be mended, yet I will venture to prophesy, that to future ages your Publication will be the text-book and standard of Scottish Song and Music.*

I am ashamed to ask another favor of you, because

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* Mr. James Johnson died at Edinburgh on 26th Feb. 1811. His obituary in the *Scots Magazine* states the fact that he was the first who adopted the practice of *striking* music upon pewter plates, whereby a great saving is made on the charge of that article. He left a widow in indigent circumstances, who died in the Charity Workhouse of the city in March 1819. The above letter is given in *fac-simile* in Stenhouse's "Illustrations of Johnson's Scots Musical Museum," Wm. Blackwood & Sons, 1839. Part of the address, "per favor of Mr. Lewars," is deleted, and the post-mark "June 17" is indicated. The sealing wax shows the poet's new heraldic bearings, engraved on the seal recently brought from Edinburgh by Mrs. Hyslop.

you have been so very good already; but my wife has a very particular friend of hers, a young lady who sings well, to whom she wishes to present "The Scots Musical Museum." If you have a spare copy, will you be so obliging as to send it by the very first Fly, as I am anxious to have it soon?*

Yours ever, R. BURNS.

The Colonel of his Volunteer Regiment made some kind enquiries about his health, to which the poet replied in eight characteristic stanzas of humorous verse in his favorite epistolary form. About the same time (records Chambers), happening to meet a neighbor who made similar enquiries, he said, in course of his rejoinder, "I find that a man may live like a fool, but he will scarcely die like one," which observation was simply a quotation from *Young's Night Thoughts*, N. iv. :—

"Men may live fools, but fools they cannot die."

A day or two before the King's Birthday (June 4th), Mrs. Riddell wrote to him requesting him to copy a song for her, and playfully suggested that he should appear at the Birthday Ball to show his loyalty, and he thus answered:—

([18]) TO MRS. WALTER RIDDELL.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

DUMFRIES, *4th June*, 1796.

I AM in such miserable health as to be incapable of showing my loyalty in any way. Racked as I am with rheumatisms, I meet every face with a greeting like that of Balak to Balaam. "Come, curse me Jacob; and come, defy me Israel!" so say I: Come, curse me thou east wind; and come, defy me the north! Would you have me in such circumstances copy you out a love-song?

* This was immediately attended to, as the reader will find in the note at page 131, *supra*.

I may perhaps see you on Saturday, but I will not be at the Ball. Why should I? "Man delights not me, nor woman either!" Can you supply me with the song, "Let us all be unhappy together?" Do, if you can, and oblige *le pauvre misérable.**

R. B.

(3) TO MR. JAMES CLARKE, SCHOOLMASTER, FORFAR.

(CHAMBERS, 1839.)†

MY DEAR CLARKE,—Still, still the victim of affliction; were you to see the emaciated figure who now holds the pen to you, you would not know your old friend. Whether I shall ever get about again, is only known to HIM, the Great Unknown, whose creature I am. Alas, Clarke, I begin to fear the worst! As to my individual self, I am tranquil—I would despise myself if I were not; but Burns's poor widow, and

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* The Song, "Let us all be unhappy together," was very popular near the close of last century, and has been recently revived in the clever parody by Lord Neaves, "Let us all be unhappy on Sunday." The two opening verses read thus:

"We bipeds, made up of frail clay,
Alas! are the children of sorrow;
Be we ever so merry to-day,
We all may be wretched to-morrow:
As sunshine is follow'd by rain,
We've nought to expect but rough weather;
So when pleasure can only bring pain,
Let us all be unhappy together.

I grant, the best blessing we know
Is a friend—for true friendship's a treasure;
And yet, lest your friend prove a foe,
O taste not the dangerous pleasure!
This *friendship's* a flimsy affair,
And riches and wealth are a bubble;
O there's nothing delightful but care,
Nor anything pleasing but trouble."

† This letter, executed in *fac-simile* printing, has been long in circulation.

half-a-dozen of his dear little ones, helpless orphans! there I am weak as a woman's tear. Enough of this! 'tis half my disease!

I duly received your last, inclosing the *note*. It came extremely in time, and I was much obliged to your punctuality. Again I must request you to do me the same kindness. Be so very good as, *by return of post*, to enclose me another note. I trust you can do it without much inconvenience, and it will seriously oblige me. If I must go, I leave a few friends behind me, whom I shall regret while consciousness remains. I know I shall live in their remembrance.

Adieu, dear Clarke! That I shall ever see you again, is, I am afraid, highly improbable.

R. BURNS.

DUMFRIES, *June* 26, 1796.

On the same day that the foregoing pathetic letter was penned, the poet wrote the fine Inscription to Jessie Lewars (*see* page 130, *supra*) on a copy of the *Museum*, which he then presented to her; and in a week thereafter he removed to sea-bathing quarters at Brow, on the Solway Firth, about ten miles south-east from Dumfries. On the day of his arrival there, he sent a short letter to Thomson enclosing a parcel of songs, with remarks and alterations inscribed on the margin. Next day he had an interview with his friend Mrs. Riddell, who happened to be residing for the benefit of her own health in the immediate neighborhood. Being informed of his arrival, she invited him to dine with her, and sent her carriage for him to the cottage where he lodged, as he was unable to walk. In a letter to one of her friends, which is quoted by Currie, she thus narrated the incident:—

"I was struck with his appearance on entering the room. The stamp of death was impressed on his features. He seemed already touching the brink of eternity. His first salutation was, 'Well, Madam, have you any commands for the other world?' I replied that it seemed a doubtful case which of us should be there soonest, and that I hoped he would yet live to write my epitaph. (I was then in a weak state of health.) He looked in my face with an air of great kindness, and expressed his concern at seeing me look so ill, with his accus-

tomed sensibility. At table he ate little or nothing, and he complained of having entirely lost the tone of his stomach. We had a long and serious conversation about his present situation, and the approaching termination of all his earthly prospects. He spoke of his death without any of the ostentation of philosophy, but with firmness as well as feeling, as an event likely to happen very soon, and which gave him concern chiefly from leaving his four children so young and unprotected, and his wife in so interesting a situation—in hourly expectation of lying in of a fifth. He mentioned with seeming pride and satisfaction the promising genius of his eldest son, and the flattering marks of approbation he had received from his teachers, and dwelt particularly on his hopes of that boy's future conduct and merit. His anxiety for his family seemed to hang heavy upon him, and the more perhaps from the reflection that he had not done them all the justice he was so well qualified to do.

"Passing from this subject, he showed great concern about the care of his literary fame, and particularly the publication of his posthumous works. He said he was well aware that his death would occasion some noise, and that every scrap of his writing would be revived against him to the injury of his future reputation—that letters and verses written with unguarded and improper freedom, and which he earnestly wished to have buried in oblivion, would be handed about by idle Vanity or Malevolence, when no dread of his resentment would restrain them, or prevent the censures of Malice or the sarcasms of Envy from pouring forth their venom to blast his fame. He lamented that he had written many epigrams on persons against whom he entertained no enmity, and whose characters he would be sorry to wound; and many indifferent poetical pieces which he feared would now, with all their imperfections on their head, be thrust upon the world. On this account he deeply regretted having deferred to put his papers in a state of arrangement, as he was now quite incapable of the exertion.

"The conversation was kept up with great evenness and animation on his side. I had seldom seen his mind greater or more collected. There was frequently a considerable degree of vivacity in his sallies, and they would probably have had a greater share, had not the concern and dejection I could not disguise, damped the spirit of pleasantry he seemed not unwilling to indulge.

"We parted about sunset on the evening of that day (5th

July); the next day I saw him again, and we parted to meet no more!"

(14) TO ALEXANDER CUNNINGHAM, ESQ.,

37 GEORGE STREET, EDINBURGH.

(CURRIE, 1800.)*

BROW, SEA-BATHING QUARTERS, *7th July* 1796.

MY DEAR CUNNINGHAM,—I received yours here this moment, and am indeed highly flattered with the approbation of the literary circle you mention; a literary circle inferior to none in the two kingdoms. Alas! my friend, I fear the voice of the bard will soon be heard among you no more! For these eight or ten months I have been ailing, sometimes bedfast and sometimes not; but these last three months I have been tortured with an excruciating rheumatism, which has reduced me to nearly the last stage. You actually would not know me if you saw me. Pale, emaciated, and so feeble as occasionally to need help from my chair—my spirits fled! fled!—but I can no more on the subject—only the medical folks tell me that my last and only chance is bathing in country quarters, and riding.—The deuce of the matter is this; when an Exciseman is off duty, his salary is reduced to £35 instead of £50.† What way, in the name of thrift, shall I maintain myself and keep a horse in

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* Compared here with the original MS., in possession of the late James Cunningham, Esq., W.S., son of the poet's correspondent.

† "Reduced to £35 instead of £50." The poet's indefiniteness here seems to be explained by supervisor Findlater in a letter to the *Glasgow Courier*, March 1834:—"A year or two before the poet's death, an addition of £15 per annum had been made to the Dumfries officers' salaries, accompanied with the condition of being stopped to those not doing duty." Thus, Burns's nominal salary of £70 was raised to £85, and he seems to have calculated that, when laid aside, only one-half of his nominal salary would be the abatement, still leaving him £50. However the *bonus*, or extra £15, came to a full stop, and left him only £35, as stated in the text. When Burns here speaks of having to keep a horse in country quarters, he refers to the fact that the exercise of riding had been prescribed by his medical advisers.

country quarters—with a wife and five* children at home on £35? I mention this, because I had intended to beg your utmost interest, and all the friends you can muster, to move our Commissioners of the Excise to grant me the full salary—I dare say you know them all personally. If they do not grant it me, I must lay my account with an exit truly *en poëte*. If I die not of disease, I must perish with hunger.

I have sent you one of the songs (Lord Gregory); the other my memory does not serve me with, and I have no copy here; but I shall be at home soon, when I will send it you. Apropos to being at home, Mrs. Burns threatens in a week or two, to add one more to my paternal charge, which, if of the right gender, I intend shall be introduced to the world by the respectable designation of *Alexander Cunningham Burns*. My last was *James Glencairn*, so you can have no objection to the company of nobility. Farewell! ROBT. BURNS.

The following anecdote, belonging to this period, is given in the words of Mr. John M'Diarmid, and there is no doubt of its authenticity:—"Rousseau, we all know, wished when dying to be carried into the open air, that he might obtain a parting look of the glorious orb of day. A night or two before Burns left Brow, he drank tea with Mrs. Craig, widow of the late minister of Ruthwell. His altered appearance excited much silent sympathy; and the evening being beautiful, and the sun shining brightly through the casement, Miss Craig (now Mrs. Henry Duncan) was afraid the light might be too much for him, and rose with the view of letting down the window blinds. Burns guessed what she meant; and, regarding the young lady with a look of great benignity, said, 'Thank you, my dear, for your kind attention; but oh, let him shine! he will not shine long for me.'"

* The poet at this time had only four living children by Mrs. Burns; therefore he must have included here his illegitimate daughter by Ann Park, who was brought up with his own family; or otherwise, he may have reckoned on Mrs. Burns's forthcoming child.

([3]) TO MR. GILBERT BURNS, MOSSGIEL.

(GILBERT BURNS'S ED. 1820.)

BROW, *Sunday, 10th July* 1796.

DEAR BROTHER,—It will be no very pleasing news to you to be told that I am dangerously ill, and not likely to get better. An inveterate rheumatism has reduced me to such a state of debility, and my appetite is so totally gone, that I can scarcely stand on my legs. I have been a week at sea-bathing, and I will continue there, or in a friend's house in the country, all the summer. God keep my wife and children; if I am taken from their head, they will be poor indeed. I have contracted one or two serious debts, partly from my illness these many months, and partly from too much thoughtlessness as to the expense when I came to town, that will cut in too much on the little I leave them in your hands. Remember me to my mother.—Yours, R. B.

([1]) TO MR. JAMES ARMOUR, MAUCHLINE.

(DR. WADDELL'S ED., 1869.)

BROW, *July* 10, 1796.

FOR Heaven's sake, and as you value the welfare of your daughter and my wife, do, my dearest Sir, write to Fife to Mrs. Armour to come if possible. My wife thinks she can yet reckon upon a fortnight. The medical people order me, *as I value my existence*, to fly to sea-bathing* and country quarters; so it is ten thousand chances to one that I shall not be within

* Here, under the poet's own hand, we have an express contradiction to Dr. Currie's assertion (no doubt founded on Dr. Maxwell's report), that Burns, "impatient of medical advice, as well as every species of controul, determined for himself to try the effects of sea-bathing."

a dozen miles of her when the hour comes. What a situation for her, poor girl, without a single friend by her on such a serious moment.

I have now been a week at salt water, and though I think I have got some good by it, yet I have some secret fears that this business will be dangerous, if not fatal. Your most affectionate son, R. B.

(42) TO MRS. DUNLOP, OF DUNLOP.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

BROW, *Tuesday, 12th July* 1796.

MADAM,—I have written you so often, without receiving any answer, that I would not trouble you again, but for the circumstances in which I am.* An illness which has long hung about me, in all probability will speedily send me beyond "that bourne whence no traveller returns." Your friendship, with which for many years you honored me, was a friendship dearest to my soul. Your conversation, and especially your correspondence, were at once highly entertaining and instructive. With what pleasure did I use to break up the seal! The remembrance yet adds one pulse more to my poor palpitating heart. Farewell!!! R. B.

At this crisis, a letter reached Burns from a writer in Dumfries craving payment of about £7, 10*s*., due by him to a clothier, for his volunteer uniform. This had a very disturbing effect on his mind; and although it seems the agent's letter contained no threats of legal proceedings, nevertheless, in his present weak condition, he regarded it as conveying the extremest menaces of personal diligence. He therefore wrote to George Thomson imploring an advance of five† pounds, and also to his cousin in Montrose for a loan of ten pounds, to meet his dreaded emergencies.

* Mrs. Dunlop's lamented neglect to reply to the poet's letters for two whole years, has been sufficiently discussed at page 88, *supra*.

† See page 312, Vol. V.

([10]) TO MR. JAMES BURNESS, WRITER, MONTROSE.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

MY DEAREST COUSIN,—When you offered me money assistance, little did I think I should want it so soon. A rascal of a haberdasher, to whom I owe a considerable bill, taking it into his head that I am dying, has commenced a process against me, and will infallibly put my emaciated body into jail. Will you be so good as to accommodate me, and that by return of post, with ten pounds? O James! did you know the pride of my heart, you would feel doubly for me! Alas! I am not used to beg! The worst of it is my health was coming about finely you know, and my physician assures me that melancholy and low spirits are half my disease; guess then my horrors when this business began! If I had it settled, I would be, I think, quite well in a manner. How shall I use the language to you, Oh do not disappoint me!—but strong necessity's curst command——

I have been thinking over and over my brother's affairs, and I fear I must cut him up; but on this I will correspond at another time, particularly as I shall [need] your advice.

Forgive me for once more mention—by return of post. Save me from the horrors of a jail!

My compliments to my friend James, and to all the rest. I do not know what I have written. The subject is so horrible I dare not look it over again.—Farewell. R. BURNS.

July 12. [*Tuesday.*]*

The last verses that Burns lived to compose were forwarded to George Thomson the same day on which the above melan-

* Collated with the poet's holograph, in his monument at Edinburgh.

choly letter was written—"I tried my hand on *Rothiemurchie* this morning." A sense of unmerited desertion by some of his most cherished friends of happier days pervades his mind. He imagines himself at Harvieston, in sight of the lofty Ochills, and he sings to Peggy Chalmers a little reproachful song. The words fit the undulations of the beautiful air with the utmost exactness.

"Fairest maid on Devon banks,
Crystal Devon, winding Devon,
Wilt thou lay that frown aside,
And smile as thou wert wont to do?
Full well thou know'st I love thee dear;
Could'st thou to malice lend an ear?
O did not Love exclaim—'Forbear!
Nor use a faithful lover so?'"

The pleasure he must have experienced in his wonted lyrical exercise is soon dashed by reading the odious letter above referred to; and distractedly he transcribes the verses just composed, and forwards them to Thomson, imploring him to remit five pounds—"Do, for God's sake, send me that sum, and that by return of post. I do not ask all this gratuitously; for, upon returning health, I hereby promise and engage to furnish you with five pounds worth of the neatest song genius you have seen."

In a few days the post conveyed to him money orders from Burness and Thomson;* but the bard was unconscious when these reached him, and he paid the debt of nature without their help.

(2) TO JAMES GRACIE, ESQ., BANKER, DUMFRIES.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

BROW, *Wednesday Morn*, [13*th July*.]

MY DEAR SIR,—It would be doing high injustice to this place not to acknowledge that my rheumatisms

* Mr. Findlater asserted that Commissioner Graham, regretting his inability to move his brother commissioners to grant Burns his full salary, sent him a private donation of £5, which unfortunately arrived too late to serve the purpose intended. It would be ungracious to express any doubt of so probable an act of generosity; but while we find in the widow's "Inventory of the personal estate of the umquhile Robert Burns," presented to the Commissary of Dumfries, the draft for £10 sent by Mr. Burness, and that for £5 sent by Mr. Thomson, we look in vain for the item applicable to Mr. Graham's remittance.

have derived great benefit from it already; but alas! my loss of appetite still continues. I shall not need your kind offer* *this* week, and I return to town the beginning of next week, it being not a tide-week. I am detaining a man in a burning hurry. So, God bless you! R. B.

(2) TO MRS. BURNS, DUMFRIES.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

BROW, *Thursday*, [14*th July*.]

MY DEAREST LOVE,—I delayed writing until I could tell you what effect sea-bathing was likely to produce. It would be injustice to deny that it has eased my pains, and, I think, has strengthened me; but my appetite is still extremely bad. No flesh nor fish can I swallow; porridge and milk is the only thing I taste. I am very happy to hear, by Miss Jessy Lewars,† that you are all well. My best and kindest compliments to her, and to all the children. I will see you on Sunday. Your affectionate husband, R. B.

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* To send a coach to give him an airing.

† That is to say—"by a letter from Jessy Lewars." Through a misreading of the text, a modern versifier, in the delusion that Miss Lewars attended the poet at Brow, was tempted to impose on the world some fictitious stanzas as a composition of Burns during his brief sojourn there. They were first published in the *New York Scotsman* of June 17, 1876. Out of eight double stanzas, headed "To Jessie Lewars," we cull the following lines to indicate the piece:—

"Ah! what is fame? Its wreath of bays
Cools not the fevered brow,
Though proudly it may tell his name
Who whistled at the plough,
And wrote a simple song or two
For happier hearts to sing,
Among the shining sheaves of corn,
Or round the household ring."

(1) TO JOHN CLARK, ESQUIRE, LOCHERWOODS.

(DOUGLAS, 1877.)

Saturday Noon [BROW, 16 *July.*]

MY DEAR SIR,—My hours of bathing have interfered so unluckily as to have put it out of my power to wait on you. In the meantime, as the tides are over, I anxiously wish to return to town, as I have not heard any news of Mrs. Burns these two days. Dare I be so bold as to borrow your gig? I have a horse at command, but it threatens to rain, and getting wet is perdition. Any time about three in the afternoon will suit me exactly.

Yours most gratefully and sincerely, R. BURNS.

The original MS. of the foregoing note was obligingly sent to Mr. Douglas by Capt. Alex. W. M. Clark Kennedy, of Knockgray, late of the Coldstream Guards. He found it recently among the papers of his great-grandfather, the late Mr. Clark of Minland. We presume that Burns left Brow on Monday, 18th July, in Mr. Clark's gig, as proposed in the note, for, although it was the poet's wish to leave on Saturday afternoon, some casualty may have set aside that arrangement. Dr. Currie's account is that the pains in the poet's limbs were relieved by the sea-bathing; but this "was *immediately* followed by a new attack of fever. When brought back to his own house in Dumfries, on the 18th of July, he was no longer able to stand upright." According to Allan Cunningham, he was brought home "in a small spring cart," which may have been the "gig" from Locherwood referred to in the poet's note. Currie says that after his arrival "a tremor pervaded his frame, his tongue was parched, and his mind sank into delirium when not roused by conversation." He nevertheless was able to pen the following note to his father-in-law, which undoubtedly is the very last written effort of Burns.*

* It is deplorable that even truthfully disposed men will deviate from facts, in their eagerness to support a pet argument. Mr. James Gray of the High School, Edinburgh, and afterwards "in holy orders" at Bhooj, in Cutch, Bombay, thus asserted in his well-known vindication of Burns:—"I saw him four days before he died, and though the hand of death was obviously upon him, he repeated to me a little poem he had composed the day before, full of energy and tenderness." Four days before his death was Sunday 17th July. Was Mr. Gray then at Brow? Burns's last little poem was (as we have seen) composed on Tuesday the 12th.

(²) TO MR. JAMES ARMOUR, MAUCHLINE.

(CUNNINGHAM, 1834.)

DUMFRIES, *Monday*, 18*th July*.

MY DEAR SIR,—Do, for Heaven's sake, send Mrs. Armour here immediately. My wife is hourly expecting to be put to bed. Good God! what a situation for her to be in, poor girl, without a friend! I returned from sea-bathing quarters to-day, and my medical friends would almost persuade me that I am better; but I think and feel that my strength is so gone, that the disorder will prove fatal to me.

Your son-in-law, R. B.

Few, but very affecting, are the particulars that have been recorded of the final death-bed scene, which really comprehended only two days and three nights, that is, from Monday evening the 18th, to Thursday morning of 21st of July. The most reliable account is that given by Mrs. Burns in her communications to Mr. M'Diarmid—"I was so struck with the change in his appearance when he came back, that I became quite speechless. From this period he was closely confined to his bed, and was *scarcely himself* for half an hour together. He was aware of this infirmity, and asked me to touch him, and remind him when he was going wrong. On the third night before he died I missed him from the bed, and found him sitting in the corner of the room with the bed-clothes about him. I got assistance, and he suffered himself to be quietly led back to bed. But for the *fit*, his strength would have been unequal to such exertion. The day before he died, he called out very quickly, and with a hale voice, 'Gilbert! Gilbert!'"—Dr. Currie adds, "On the fourth day, the sufferings of this great, but ill-fated genius were terminated, and a life was closed in which Virtue and Passion were at constant variance."

Chambers explains, in regard to the very last moments of the bard, that "to secure quietness, the children had been sent to the house of Mr. Lewars. Jessy hovered by his couch with her usual assiduity, and Findlater occasionally came to soothe the last moments of his friend. Early in the morning of the 21st, Burns had sunk into deep delirium, and it became evi-

dent that nature was well-nigh exhausted. Dr. Maxwell, who had watched by his bed the greater part of the night, was gone, and the only persons who remained in the room were a pair of humble but sympathizing neighbors. The children were sent for to see their parent for the last time in life. They stood round the bed, while calmly and gradually he sank into his last repose. The eldest son retained a distinct recollection of the scene, and has reported the sad fact that the last words of the bard were a muttered execration against the legal agent by whose letter, wittingly or unwittingly, the parting days of Burns had been embittered."

To the above authentic information certain details have been added by Allan Cunningham, as from his own observation, which, however picturesque, cannot be accepted in any other light than as an effort of fancy. The narrator in fact was only eleven years and a few months old when Burns died. That he even lived in Dumfries at the time may be doubted. "Dumfries," he tells us, "was like a besieged place. It was known he was dying, and the anxiety, not of the rich and learned only, but of the mechanics and peasants, exceeds all belief. Wherever two or three people stood together, their talk was of Burns, and of him alone. They spoke of his history, of his person, of his works, of his family, of his fame, and of his untimely and approaching fate, with a warmth and an enthusiasm which will ever endear Dumfries to my remembrance. All that he said or was saying—the opinions of the physicians (and Maxwell was a kind and a skilful one) were eagerly caught up and reported from street to street and from house to house." One of the deathbed incidents he thus narrates without stating his authority:—"His good humor was unruffled, and his wit never forsook him. He looked to one of his fellow-volunteers with a smile, as he stood by the bedside with eyes wet, and said, 'John, don't let the awkward squad fire upon me.'"

"The death of Burns," says Currie, "made a strong and general impression on all who had interested themselves in his character, and especially on the inhabitants of the town and county in which he had spent the latter years of his life. Flagrant as his follies and errors had been, they had not deprived him of the respect and regard entertained for the extraordinary powers of his genius, and the generous qualities of his heart. The Gentlemen Volunteers of Dumfries resolved to bury their illustrious associate with military honors, and every preparation was made to render this last service solemn

and impressive. The Fencible Infantry of Angus-shire,* and the regiment of cavalry of the Cinque Ports,† at that time quartered in Dumfries, offered their assistance on this occasion; the principal inhabitants of the town and neighborhood determined to walk in the funeral procession; and a vast concourse of persons assembled, some of them from a considerable distance, to witness the obsequies of the Scottish Bard."

To suit these arrangements, the coffined remains of the poet were removed from his house to the Town Hall on the evening of Sunday, 24th July; and at twelve o'clock noon of the following day the funeral cortege moved in the direction of his last resting-place in St. Michael's Church-yard. The streets were lined by the military, and the great bells of the churches tolled at intervals as the procession passed on, headed by a firing party of twenty members of the poet's own company of Volunteers in full uniform, and arms reversed. The bier was surrounded and supported by members of the same company, each wearing crape on the left arm; and that was immediately followed by relatives of the deceased and chief inhabitants of town and country. After these came the remainder of the Volunteers, followed by a military guard—the whole procession moving in slow time to the solemn music of the "Dead March in Saul." Arrived at the churchyard gate, the firing party, according to the rules of that exercise, formed two lines, and leaned their heads on their fire-locks, which were pointed to the ground. Through this space the coffin was borne forward to the grave, and solemnly deposited in the earth. The party then drew up alongside of it, and fired the farewell salute of three volleys over the body of their sleeping comrade. Thus closed a ceremony which presented a solemn, grand, and affecting spectacle, according well with the general sorrow and regret for the loss of a man whose like we can scarce see again.

The foregoing account is taken nearly verbatim from the "Dumfries Journal" of Tuesday, 26th July 1796. We are thus particular in order to correct an error of date committed by

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* According to Dr. Charles Rogers, one of the privates of this regiment was John Burnes, then twenty-four years old, a distant Kincardineshire relation of Burns. That genealogist, however, ventures on the unsupported statement that the poet and his "far-away cousin" became acquainted in Dumfries, and that while there the latter composed his afterwards well-known chapbook metrical tale, called "Thrummy Cap," and submitted it to the ailing bard's inspection. *Gen. Mem.* 1877, *p.* 10.

† Among the junior officers of this Cavalry Regiment was the Hon. Mr. Jenkinson, afterwards Earl of Liverpool, and Prime Minister.—*R. Chambers.*

Currie, Lockhart, Cunningham, and others, who represent the funeral as taking place on 26th July.* Lockhart also speaks of the poet's remains being "laid in state" in the Town Hall. This latter mistake seems to have arisen through an apocryphal statement by Allan Cunningham, who tells his readers that several days after the poet's death, he was one of a long procession of sympathizing neighbors who "went to see him laid out for the grave." That biographer has also been detected in a misstatement as to the weather on the day of interment: his words are, "The day was a fine one, the sky was almost without a cloud, and not a drop of rain fell from dawn to twilight." He is thus contradicted by the recent recovery of a diary written by the late Mr. William Grierson of Dumfries, quoted by Dr. Waddell on this question:—"Monday 25th. Showery forenoon, pleasant afternoon, wet evening and night. This day, at 12 o'clock, went to the burial of Robert Burns," &c. The value of the adage, "One jotting made on the spot is worth a cart load of recollections," is thus established in a striking manner.

Dr. Currie concludes his account of the interment of Burns by noting the affecting circumstance that "on the morning of the day of her husband's funeral, Mrs. Burns was undergoing the pains of labor, and that during the solemn service above described, the posthumous son of our poet was born."

The reader will have observed that Burns, in writing to Mr. Alexander Cunningham, precisely a fortnight before he expired, promised to name his forthcoming child (if a boy) "Alexander Cunningham Burns." The boy, however, received the name of "Maxwell," in compliment to the amiable physician who so kindly gave his services to the family of the bard. Currie farther informs us that shortly after the death of Burns, "the inhabitants of Dumfries and its neighborhood opened a subscription for the support of his wife and family, and Mr. Miller of Dalswinton, Mr. M'Murdo of Drumlanrig, Dr. Maxwell, Mr. Syme, and Mr. Alexander Cunningham of Edinburgh, became trustees for the application of the money to its proper objects." In the *Edinburgh Advertiser* of 26th July appeared a notice on this subject which must have been drawn by a very injudicious friend, its tone being most disrespectful to the memory of the deceased, as the following excerpt will show:—"The public to whose amusement he has so largely contributed, will

* A striking instance of how errors are perpetuated is shown in the poet's Family Register. Col. W. N. Burns closed the record by noting that the boy "Maxwell was born on 26th July, the day of his father's funeral."

hear with regret that his extraordinary endowments were accompanied with frailties which rendered him useless to himself and family. The last moments of his short life were spent in sickness and indigence; and his widow with five infant children, and in hourly expectation of a sixth, is now left without any resource but what she may hope from the regard due to the memory of her husband."*

A question of some nicety has arisen in regard to the apparently premature death of Burns. Was this untimely eclipse inevitable? Robert Chambers was disposed to contend that "the bard's life was cut short by an accidental disease in the midst of a career attended by no essential privations, and not unhopeful." Carlyle started the same question, but he inclines to an opposite view from that of Chambers. "We are not medically informed," he writes, "whether any continuance of years was at this period probable for Burns—whether his death is to be looked on as in some sense an accidental event, or only as the natural consequence of the long series of events that had preceded. The latter seems to be the likelier opinion; and yet it is by no means a certain one. At all events *some change* could not be far distant. Three gates of deliverance, it seems to us, were open for Burns: clear poetical activity; madness; or death. The *first*, with longer life, was still possible, though not probable; for physical causes were beginning to be concerned in it: and yet Burns had an iron resolution, could he but have seen and felt that not only his highest glory, but his first duty, and the true medicine for all his woes lay there. The *second* was still less probable; for his mind was ever among the clearest and firmest. So, the milder *third* gate was opened for him; and he passed, not softly yet speedily, into the still country, where the hailstorms and fire-showers do not reach, and the heaviest-laden wayfarer at length lays down his load."

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* It is evident from this closing sentence, that the Advertisement had been drawn up (probably by Syme) before the poet's funeral. Here also, the child "Elizabeth," daughter of the deceased Ann Park of the Globe Tavern, must be included with the poet's children, to make up the number stated.